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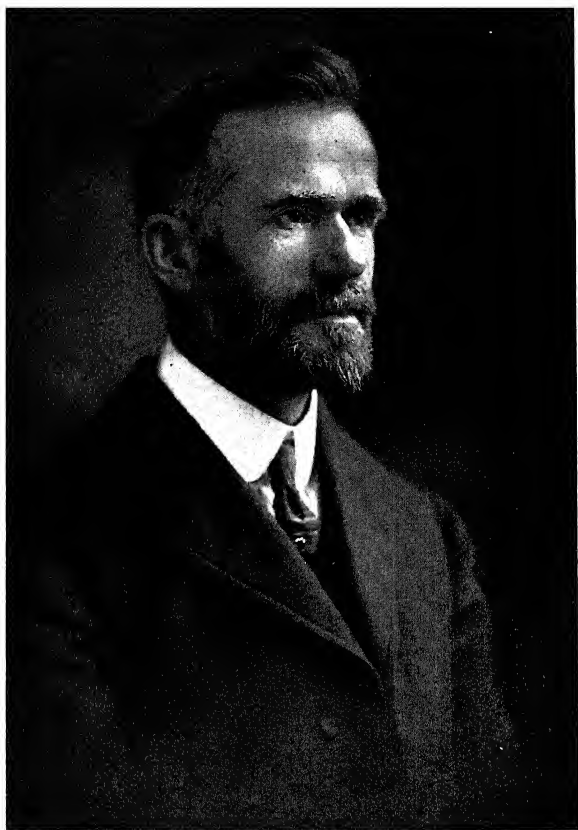




DARE WE BE CHRISTIANS







# DARE WE BE CHRISTIANS

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THE PILGRIM PRESS  
BOSTON    NEW YORK    CHICAGO

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THE PLIMPTON PRESS  
NORWOOD • MASS • U.S.A

DARE WE BE CHRISTIANS





## DARE WE BE CHRISTIANS?

GOD'S world is great; too great for a little mind like mine to hold. I have traveled over thousands of miles of it, but for the most part my memory holds only a blur of space and movement.

But there are a few places which my memory has made all my own. I know a place, just above Little Mud Turtle Lake, where the Gull River tilts around the rocks and sweeps in a curling crescent of foam around the wooded basin below the rapids. That place is mine because I swam in it with my boys; the river carried us down the rapids and around the whirlpool, shouting and laughing. 'Way up on the Ox Tongue River is a high, straight fall, and above it a platform of

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rock. I lay there one night in the open, while the cool night wind moved the treetops, and watched the constellations march across the spaces between them. That place is mine by the emotions and prayers it inspired.

The world of the Bible, too, is a great world. I have wandered through it all, but I have never made it all my own. But some friendly hills and valleys in it are mine by right of experience. Some chapters have comforted me; some have made me homesick; some have braced me like a bugle call; and some always enlarge me within by a sense of unutterable fellowship with a great, quiet Power that pervades all things and fills me.

Such passages make up for each of us his Bible within the Bible, and the extent and variety of these claims he has staked out in it measure how much of the great Book

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has really entered into the substance of his life.

### PAUL'S PRAISE OF LOVE

Some passages are common camping ground for us all. The thirteenth chapter of Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians is one of these. That half-page of print has been a force in human history. If we could follow its course through the generations, we should find it marked, like the windings of a brook, by a special greenness of life, by ferns and buttercups and gentians and cardinal flowers of human kindness. It has set the mired runnels of good-will flowing again. It has gentled our resentful feelings and made us forgiving. By making us feel the worth of love, it has made us feel the worth of those we ought to love. The old psalm ascribes to the pilgrim saints of God the capacity to "pass through the valley of weeping"

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and leave it "a place of springs." This saintly little chapter has done just that by its irrigation of affection and cleansed will.

It has such power to move us because it moved Paul deeply as he wrote it. His sentences suddenly grow rhythmic. His style runs into prose-poetry. His language rocks with the wave-beat of emotion. He was sure of a similar response from the Christian hearts to whom he was writing. This chapter is first-class evidence that primitive Christianity was charged with a high voltage of human affection and social enthusiasm, for this Christian man was shaken with deep feeling as soon as he began to touch on this live subject that was sure and common ground for the Christian consciousness.

The chapter is also documentary evidence of inspiration. Here we can watch inspiration in the very act and see the spirit of Christ

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bearing up the flutterings of the human mind with the sweep of mightier wings.

### EMOTIONAL RELIGION

Paul apparently had not intended to write this chapter. It came to him while he was discussing the vexed question of "spiritual gifts." In aftertimes Christianity came to mean largely creeds, rituals, rules, holy buildings and priests — a sort of religion at second hand with a reflected light and warmth. But in the first generation it came over men as a power direct from the unseen world; as a new and sweet vitality that melted their hearts with a glow of divine love and overwhelmed the baser passions of the past; as a revelation and vision that made their intellect clairvoyant, creating an insight and foresight that transcended the mental powers of which they had previously been conscious, inspir-

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ing prayers and longings so intense and lofty that they seemed to hear God's own spirit groaning in travail within their breasts. Such spiritual life was fertile in manifold expressions. The Christians called them "spiritual gifts" and classified them.

Now, when religion comes over a whole community with this elemental force, it is not an unmixed blessing. The power that establishes the souls of the strong may unhinge the minds of the weak. Look around and you will find plenty of men and women who do not realize God in the life-giving power of the sunshine and the daily goodness of life, but who do realize him in thunderstorms, earthquakes and sudden blessings. Religion for them begins beyond the boundary line of the normal, and becomes the more divine the more abnormal it is. They take joy in yielding their emotions and

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their intellect to mysterious powers and abdicating the possession of their own personality in favor of uncontrollable psychic forces.

There was one "gift" called "tongues." According to the traits mentioned by Paul in the fourteenth chapter it was a form of utterance with a maximum of emotion and a minimum of reason, cries and croonings that seemed repellant and insane to outsiders and unintelligible to Christians, and that left no clear thought even in the minds of those who spoke in "tongues." But it was no doubt very wonderful to those who took this plunge into the perfumed cataract of religious emotions.

Some at Corinth were in doubt about this matter, as they well might be, and asked Paul to advise them. He took up the subject formally in the twelfth chapter. He pleaded for a broad-minded tolerance of all the "varieties of

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religious experience." "There are varieties of talents, but the same Spirit; varieties of service, but the same Lord; varieties of effects, but the same God who effects everything in everyone." As the richly-organized life of the human body depends on the manifoldness of its members and of their functions, so with the social body of a Christian community.

#### SOCIAL UTILITY IN RELIGION

Thus Paul, as usual, stands for the broader and more inclusive attitude. But it is well worth noting that he pleads for this toleration, not because every individual has an inherent right to the expression of his peculiar religious experiences and ideas, but because the interaction of many different capacities will in the end serve the common good. Paul is the patron saint of all modern religious individualists; his writ-



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ings are their chief reliance in the Bible. Yet here he applies the test of social utility to the most intimate expression of religious life. He argues that religious diversity and individualism are good because they serve the community.

This social estimate of religious endowments involves another thought which he brings out in the fourteenth chapter — namely that the various gifts must rank high or low in the Christian estimate according to the degree of their serviceableness to all. He held that “prophesying” was far better than “speaking with tongues,” because it was rational, intelligible to all and sure to educate the Christian intelligence of the whole group, while “speaking with tongues” at most blessed him who spoke, but wasted the time and opportunity of the rest. So he demands that the needs of the community shall have the right of

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way over private religious pleasures, and advises those who "speak with tongues" to do it in the privacy of their own prayers.

This was very clever of Paul. Most of the abnormal and highly-wrought manifestations of religion suck their strength from popular notice and admiration. Isolate them and they wilt. Paul did here for religious emotionalism what Jesus did for the religious formalism of the Pharisees, when he advised them to take their long prayers into their closets and see how much would be left of them if God alone took notice of them.

In favoring prophesying over "speaking with tongues" Paul prefers religion *plus* reason to religion *minus* reason—a principle of immense practical importance. And here again he takes the social ground that religion which has utility for the community is better than religion which serves only

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personal needs, even if the latter seems the more wonderful and inspired.

Thus we have in the twelfth and fourteenth chapters two main lines of thought: first, that the Christian Church can tolerate a large diversity of religious forces and forms of expression, provided they all serve the common good; second, that those forms of religion rank highest which are most completely under the direction of reason and most serviceable to the whole group.

I repeat that the precision with which Paul brings out this social criterion in religious questions is unstudied evidence of the strong social force set free by the Christian religion. Paul often asserted that every act of a Christian man should be upborne by religious impulses; even when we eat and drink we should do so "in Christ" and "to the glory of God." But here he

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sticks to the reverse of this just as tenaciously, affirming that all religious life must have social utility and that its value is measured by its social qualities.

Now it had apparently been in Paul's mind to pass directly from the discussion in the twelfth chapter about the manifoldness of spiritual gifts to the second part of the discussion, in the fourteenth chapter, about the superior value of prophesying. He was about to make the transition in the thirty-first verse: "Set your mind on the higher gifts"; that is, so far as you have a choice, cultivate those spiritual experiences which will be most fruitful to all. He later has to come back to this transitional thought at the beginning of the fourteenth chapter: "Follow after love; yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophesying."

## AN INSPIRED INTERRUPTION

But the smooth progress of his argument is interrupted. A still more important thought demands the right of way. "Hold! Listen! There is something still higher and more excellent. All speaking with tongues, all prophesying, all religious insight, all miracle-working faith, all alms-giving, all the heroism of martyrdom, are condemned to futility unless love is an ingredient in them."

This unintentional origin of Paul's praise of love is to me one of the most suggestive facts about it. One of the most beautiful and powerful religious utterances in all literature thus rose spontaneously from a Christian soul. It is as if an angel had touched him on the shoulder and said: "Speak the final word, Paul! Tell them the greatest thing of all." So here we catch inspiration in the act.

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The quiet, logical march of the argument was burst apart by a thought so divine and insistent that it could not wait, and that thought was the indispensableness of love in religion.

But in reality it was no interruption. Inspiration does not paralyze reason but intensifies it; it does not tear up the track of true argument, but lifts argument to higher levels. In form this praise of love is an interlude, an intermezzo in *adagio cantabile*; in substance it was the real climax of the whole reasoning. The fundamental Christian consciousness of Paul demanded utterance and everything else had to stand aside. The discussion about the relative value of tongues and prophesying, which was to have been the culmination, becomes a mere corollary after Christ has spoken in Paul.

For the emphasis on love was that spiritual strain which he had

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most directly derived from the Master himself. To Jesus the law of love was so great and all-inclusive that he felt it summed up and superseded the whole majestic framework of the Jewish law. Jesus transformed the inherited conceptions of God himself by baptizing the Hebrew Jehovah in love and reintroducing the imperious King of Sinai to humanity as the Father whom they might love because he loved them to the death. So it was the inspiration of the spirit of Christ which spoke up in Paul when he paused to assert that love is the last and best word of life and the indispensable ingredient of all that claims to be Christian.

Does Paul, then, at this highest point of his argument turn his back on the demand for social utility which he expressed in the other parts? On the contrary. In demanding love he demands social

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solidarity. Love is the social instinct, the power of social coherence, the *sine qua non* of human society. In putting his hand on love as the essential thing in the Christian life, he laid hold at the same time of the most important thing in all social philosophy. For if there were no love there would be no sociology.

## WE NEED A MODERN SUPPLEMENT

The supreme value of love emerged in Paul's mind when he was looking for a clear landmark to guide himself and his Corinthian friends across the uncharted sea of emotional religion. Now, the specific questions with which he had to deal have become obsolete. The "spiritual gifts" died out in the second or third generation, as they have always died out gradually in later inspirational Christian bodies. Few of us have



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ever heard anyone speak in "tongues." But love is as great and indispensable as ever. The demand that religion shall be socially fruitful has been taken up by all the world today with an insistent cry that has shaken the Church and has produced an overhauling of all its life.

We ought to see the indispensableness of love amid the facts of the twentieth century with the same precision and the same Christian enthusiasm as Paul saw it in the first century. We have a long historical perspective of nineteen hundred years where Paul had only the clouded mirror of prophetic foresight. We have the vast horizon of modern international relations, the huge conflicts of social forces, against which we must see the need of love, whereas Paul lived in the main within the slender groups of Christians scattered through Asia Minor and Greece,

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focussing their interests intensely, and seeing all the other mighty social forces of the Roman Empire only as the dark and heaving background of Christian martyrdom and triumph.

It is no great evidence of Christian faith and inspiration if we rehearse Paul's points of view and misinterpret our world by superimposing his world over it. Have we faith enough to believe that the Christian doctrine of love is the solution of our big modern questions? Do we dare to assert the futility of everything in our great world of commerce and industry that leaves love out? Do we dare to undertake the readjustment of all social life to bring it into obedience to the law of love? That is a far severer test of our faith in Christ than to believe in the infallibility of a book or in the certainty of dogmas formulated so long ago that only a few hundred

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men in Christendom today know what they originally were meant to mean.

We need a modern supplement to Paul's praise of love, written in the face of present-day problems and with a twentieth-century point of view, but with the same old Christian enthusiasm for love and the same old faith in the power of Jesus Christ to inspire love. I have not Paul's mind. I have neither the severe consistency of his reasoning nor the swift terseness of his phrases nor the blazing heat of his sacrificial enthusiasm — and it seems an amusing work of supererogation even to disavow any such thought. But I take him at his word — that “there are diversities of gifts but the same spirit” — and propose to write a few variations on his *Leitmotif*, which he, in turn, got from our common Master.

## THE SCOPE OF LOVE IN SOCIETY

In order to understand the place of love in human life we must first understand the scope of the word we use, the manifoldness and reach of the force we are to discuss.

Whenever the Christian religion comes to a new people, it finds the native vocabulary defective for its special purposes. In the rich vocabulary of the Greek language it could find plenty of words to express hate, but none that signified humility without casting on it the slur of servility, and none that signified love without a taint of sexual suggestiveness. When King James' Version was made for the English the translators of this chapter took refuge in the frosty word "charity" as more ecclesiastical, safe and proper. The men who made the Revised Version in 1881 risked the plain English "love," but even yet the idea of

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sex dominates the involuntary associations of ideas which it drags along with it.

The attraction between man and woman is indeed the most striking and stirring form of love. We can gauge its force by the intense joy of its satisfactions, and the agony when love is unrequited or its trust wronged or its faithfulness broken. Two persons, at opposite poles in their physical tastes, their æsthetic habits, their aims in life, perhaps strangers to each other until recently, break away from the family bonds of a lifetime and enter into a physical and mental intimacy of life which binds them in a lasting social partnership of work and mutual care. If it were not an old story it would be a miracle. Even its reflected sensations are so charming that we never tire of reading love stories or discreetly watching them in real life.

But the love of the sexes is only

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a specialized form of that larger love which pervades our race. The absorbing interest that lovers take in each other is only an enrichment and intensification of that purely human interest which we take in any person we like. The more of that general interest there is fused with the special passion, the nobler and more durable will it be. If there is nothing but sex-desire we call it vice. As Tolstoi has finely said, a man loves his wife purely if he thinks of her as his sister as well as his wife.

The institution of the family places upon sex-love a heavy load of work and obligation, and so tames it. Society practically says to sex-desire what Paul said to emotional religion: "Thou must be socially useful or thou shalt get no respect or countenance from us. If thou wilt form a co-operative group for service and bear children for humanity, we will honor and

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protect; if not, we will punish." There are some who think it would be wiser to take the saddle, the bit and the bridle from this vagrant and restless and greedy desire, letting it bear only such social obligations as it chooses and as long as it chooses. I do not care to live long enough to see that.

Through the attraction of man and maid love is always weaving new combinations of lives, reaching out to the right and the left and knitting threads that had no connections before, bringing whole groups of families into friendly cooperation and laughing at the efforts of the proud to isolate themselves from the rest of their kind.

At the same time love is preparing to connect the present and the future generations. To lovers their love seems their own peculiar joy and apart from all the world. But Humanity stands in the shadow

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behind them and lifts the majestic hands of blessing above them. The indomitable spirit of the race is reaching out in them toward the better days that are to be and is flinging a new defiance to death as they affirm life together.

Out of their union buds the next generation of men, and at once love springs forward to bind the young and the mature in a new and amazing bond. The love of fatherhood and motherhood is a divine revelation and miracle. It is a creative act of God in us. Last year it was not; this year it is, and all things are changed. The dry rock of our selfishness has been struck and the water of sacrificial love pours forth. The thorn-bush is aflame with a beautiful fire that does not consume. The springing up of this new force of love is essential for the very existence of human society. Unless it were promptly forthcoming, children would die like



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the flies of later summer and the race would perish.

These family affections are the most striking and powerful forms of human love. They have the support of physical nearness and of constant intercourse and habit. But the social impulse of the race is just as truly at work in the keen interest we take in a chance-met stranger, in the cheer we feel in meeting a boyhood friend, in the sense of comradeship with those who work or play alongside of us. Every normal man has uncounted relations of good-will, and the mobility of modern life has immensely increased the contacts for most of us.

Love takes on as many forms in society as life assumes in vegetation. When it turns toward the strong and noble we call it admiration. When it turns down toward the helpless we call it pity and compassion. The sense of ob-

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ligation and sympathy that draws young men and women to share the life of the poor or the backward races is love. The loyalty we feel for the great leaders in politics or war, for the masters of science, poetry, or wisdom, is a specialized form of love.

Almost every personal relation of affection connects us with a group of people who have the same interest or who are somehow identified with persons whom we love. So the love for one man promptly widens out into the love of many and weaves more closely the web of social life.

But many of our loves are directly for groups and organizations of men — for our church, our lodge, our fraternity, our college, our party. All such relationships are strong in just the degree in which they evoke love. The cohesion of selfishness is brittle. Selfishness sticks while it feeds, and

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then wipes its mouth and turns away. Love alone creates enduring loyalties and persuades the individual to give up something of his own for the common good of society. Therefore all organizations cultivate loyalty and the team spirit. "The team spirit" is a modern name for the wider, cooperative love.

Still larger than these selective group-relations is the patriotic enthusiasm for city, state, and country. In times of common peril or deliverance we realize the enormous power of this vast collective love, which shakes men with fierce emotion and sends them to wounds, sickness and death. Here, too, love is the real cement of society. The state has the right and power of coercion, but any state that relies chiefly on force is perishable and doomed. Republics may be slovenly and ill-prepared, but they have great staying powers in war,

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because they are sustained by the love of the people. No state can afford to disregard the disaffection of a large class or the work of any party that substitutes sullenness and contempt for patriotic pride.

Thus love widens out from the jealous desire of a lover who monopolizes the caresses of his beloved, to the large devotion of the great lovers of mankind and the leaders of humane causes. The firm mouth and strong jaws of Washington's portraits do not symbolize love to us like the tender face of the Madonna brooding over her child, but the steadfast devotion with which he lifted his country and his cause through years of strain and fear was an equally sublimated type of love, the love of a strong man who serves his country.

In all its forms love creates an enjoyment of contact and a desire for more of it, a sense of the worth and human beauty of those we

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love, pride in their advancement, joy in their happiness, pain in their suffering, a consciousness of unity, an identity of interests, an instinctive realization of solidarity.

This is the wide sense in which we must use the word "love" if we are to realize the incomparable power and value of love in human life. Our understanding of life depends on our comprehension of the universal power of love. Our capacity to build society depends on our power of calling out love. Our faith in God and Christ is measured by our faith in the value and workableness of love.

## LOVE AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

Every step of social progress demands an increase in love. The history of evolution is a history of the appearance and the expansion of love. The first dawn of social cohesion appears in the love

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of parent animals for their young. The sympathetic type emerges as we ascend the scale of life. The offspring of love survive, propagate, and bequeath their capacity for love. Nature, by the power of life and death, weeds out the loveless and increases the totality of love in the universe.

In the history of man social organization began in groups that had common blood and the sense of kinship to bind them. Every enduring enlargement of political organization demands a basis of fellow-feeling, and love as well as common economic interests. Kings and statesmen have tried to patch nations and races together by treaties or coercion, but unless intermarriage has fused the blood, and religion and common suffering have welded the spirits of the people, empires have dropped apart again along the ancient lines of cleavage. The history of the Ger-

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mans, the Italians and the Slavs in the nineteenth century and to-day consists largely of the effort to undo the artificial cobbling and stitching of kingcraft and to allow the nations to coalesce in commonwealths along the lines marked out by national love and race coherence.

We can watch the society-making force of love at work in the creation of new social organizations. Not even a little local trade union nor lodge nor church nor club can be made successful unless there are in its membership some individuals with the higher qualities of enthusiasm and affection. Selfish interests are necessary, too, for durability, but love is the real chemical for amalgamation.

Where new organizations have to overcome resistance and hostility, as in the case of new religious movements or in the labor movement and socialism, the com-

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mon suffering and the need of sympathetic support of mind by mind create a wonderful fund of fraternal love. Perhaps from the larger point of view of God the selfish opposition of those who resist the movements of the people may be justified by the fact that the labor and suffering which they impose upon the lower classes evokes love and creates solidarity — much as the travail and toil of childbearing binds the mother to her child — and so fits the new social group for future control.

Cooperative organizations are a remarkable demonstration of the society-making power of love. Judged from a financial point of view they have no chance of survival. Those who organize them usually have little capital, little experience, little business ability. The cooperatives are matched against the best survivors of capitalistic competition, and their en-



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trance into the field often causes a united effort of all their competitors to keep them down, while they themselves are forbidden by their principles to undersell the others. Yet with proper management they have slowly built up an international success that commands the increasing admiration of social students. Their strength is in love. They succeed best among the lower classes, who always have to practise interdependence. They utilize strong neighborly feeling, the goodwill of old acquaintanceship and kinship, or the new loyalty of socialist convictions, and the hatred for exploitation. They do not succeed among classes where every man is for himself, intent on advancing personally and quite willing to leave others behind. The next fifty years will see a long contest for survival and dominion between the capitalistic and the cooperative type of organization.

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The former is strong through selfishness and possession; the latter through the resources of love.

Thus love is the society-making force. Social progress depends on the available supply of love. If the sense of solidarity is so strong that injustice and oppression are intolerable to all and the creation of new fraternal relations is swift and easy, then society can efficiently meet every new strain. If one large class has no fellow-feeling and conscious regard for another large class, a flaw runs through the girder and it may split under pressure.

### THE BREAKDOWN OF LOVE

This is exactly the situation which confronts us in the industrial world in all nations, including our own. Love has failed between great social classes of men. The working class have become doubtful of the identity of interest be-

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tween them and the employing and possessing class. They feel they are being victimized and not led. They lag in their work. The spontaneous capacities of labor evoked by love lie dormant in them. They feel that they are hirelings and not friends of those who control their lives. They believe the share of the collective wealth which is paid over to them is determined by their own weakness and the legal and economic power of the opposing group, and not by the productive value of their work nor by their human needs.

This interpretation of their relations may be mistaken in detail. Where love is lacking, the atmosphere becomes clouded with suspicion and misunderstandings, and it becomes increasingly hard to see the truth, even for those who desire to see it. But where the area of hostility is so wide, the feeling so bitter, and the funda-

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mental charge of injustice so frequently and clearly substantiated, no excuse or counter-charge can settle the question any longer. Jesus says if we become conscious that our brother has a grievance against us, it becomes the prime concern of our mind to make the matter right. Even if the consciousness comes to us when we are engaged in the most solemn and reverential act of religion, we are to drop everything and first heal the broken fellowship and establish love. The upper classes throughout the world are in that position. Their right of occupation and the justice of their stewardship are under challenge. The gravest issue is not simply a question of dollars and cents, but of the sterilization of love by social injustice. If love is really as important to God and humanity as we have said, this social antagonism becomes a very serious thing to a religious mind.

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Must we permanently live in a loveless industrial world, or do we dare to be Christians?

The frequency with which our communities have to fall back on physical coercion is a symptom of the failure of love, for love can usually dispense with force. The more love, the less force; the more force, the less love. Despotic government had to use plentiful force to keep its unnatural structure erect. The spread of democracy has brought a great softening of the horrors of criminal law and it will yet bring us a great lessening of militarism. Every proposed increase in police force and military organization is a challenge and accusation against those institutions of society which ought to create social solidarity. If ever our country draws toward its ruin, it will bristle with efficient arsenals and hired fighters. The constant use of military violence in labor dis-

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putes in our country proves that industry is still in the despotic stage. It needs democratizing and Christianizing.

### LOVE AND MODERN BUSINESS'

The severest test and the most urgent task of love today is in the field of business life. Unless love can dominate the making of wealth, the wealth of our nation will be the ferment of its decay. There will be no genuine advance for human society until business experiences the impulse, the joy, and the mental fertility of free teamwork. As long as industry is built on fundamental antagonisms and the axle of every wheel is hot with smothered resentment, there can be no reign of love and no new era of civilization. Our age is asking the leaders of the business world to take a great constructive forward step and to found business on organized love. It summons them to

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be Christians in business. It seems like a leap in the dark. Will they dare?

Every great engineering work is financed by the stored labor of the past. In the same way all moral progress must draw on the reservoir of righteous purpose and human sympathy stored by religion. Is there enough love in our nation to back up a great moral advance?

Whoever utilizes a woman to satisfy his desires, without respecting her soul and her equal human worth, prostitutes her. Whoever utilizes a man to satisfy his desire for wealth, without respecting his soul and his equal human worth, and without realizing the beating heart and hopes of his fellow, prostitutes him. Whoever gives the consent of his mind to getting unearned gain, to getting more from his fellows than he returns to them in service, steps outside of the realm of love. If the law protects

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semi-predatory undertakings it involves all the citizens of a democracy in wrong-doing. If the Church looks on injustice without holy anger it allows the institution of redemptive love to give shelter to lovelessness, and is itself involved in the charge of hypocrisy.

Paul laid on religion the indispensableness of love. The Christian Church must lay the same law on modern business. Thus:

*If I create wealth beyond the dream of past ages and increase not love, my heat is the flush of fever and my success will deal death.*

*Though I have foresight to locate the fountains of riches, and power to preempt them, and skill to tap them, and have no loving vision for humanity, I am blind.*

*Though I give of my profits to the poor and make princely endowments for those who toil for me, if I have no human fellowship of love with them my life is barren and doomed.*



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*Love is just and kind. Love is not greedy and covetous. Love exploits no one; it takes no unearned gain; it gives more than it gets. Love does not break down the lives of others to make wealth for itself; it makes wealth to build the life of all. Love seeks solidarity; it tolerates no divisions; it prefers equal work-mates; it shares its efficiency. Love enriches all men, educates all men, gladdens all men.*

*The values created by love never fail; but whether there are class privileges, they shall fail; whether there are millions gathered, they shall be scattered; and whether there are vested rights, they shall be abolished. For in the past strong men lorded it in ruthlessness and strove for their own power and pride, but when the perfect social order comes, the strong shall serve the common good. Before the sun of Christ brought in the dawn, men competed, and forced tribute from weakness, but when the full day*

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*shall come, they will work as mates in love, each for all and all for each. For now we see in the fog of selfishness, darkly, but then with social vision; now we see our fragmentary ends, but then we shall see the destinies of the race as God sees them. But now abideth honor, justice, and love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.*

### LOVE VALIDATES ITSELF

(Love carries its own validation. It proves its own efficiency and trustworthiness in action. Selfishness always looks safe; love always looks like an enormous risk.) But many a man has found that when all his other securities had depreciated, love still paid dividends. Those who are too timid to embark in some venture of love are finally left on the desert shores of a life without interest or hope.

We never live so intensely as

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when we love strongly. We never realize ourselves so vividly as when we are in the full glow of love for others.

Love establishes the fullest intellectual contact with the world about us. It has a passionate desire for full comprehension, whereas selfishness loses interest as soon as it has made the other serve its ends. To understand things and people we must love them. Love is the greatest educator, the most permanent stimulus of the intellectual life. The animals that stand out among others by their intelligence — the dog, the ant, the bee, the elephant — are all social and gregarious beings; a beast that lives a solitary life must have incessant training to learn a few poor tricks. A selfish person becomes a stupid person if he lives long enough. Other things being equal, the loving people are the wise people. Selfishness grinds a thin

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edge on the mind but this edge turns and then makes a ragged cut. Love has the keenest insight and yet does not hurt. Selfish cleverness sees keenly the surface mechanisms of life which it wants to manipulate; love instinctively imparts the deeper secrets and larger meanings of God's world. The light of true wisdom does not fall on the facts of life from any outward source; it is shed only from the inner eye of him who beholds them, and if his inner eye is darkened, there is no wisdom in all the world for him.

Love demands sacrifice, and sacrifice seems the denial and surrender of life. (Actually love is the great intensifier of life and giving our life preserves it.) By seeking life selfishly, we lose it; when we lose it for love we gain it. We are far more active and self-assertive when we impart than when we receive. It is literally true that

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“it is more blessed to give than to receive.”

When people have lived for forty years and their desires begin to flag, the great test of age arrives. If they have launched young bodies and minds on the great adventurous cruise of life, there are still for them the hoisting of pennants, the slap of the open sea, the foreboding of the storm, the pride of the successful homeward run. If they have identified themselves for years with some cause of humanity—the cause of temperance or purity or peace or justice—working for it and suffering for it, their lives will have a meaning and a hope and a great pride to the end. But if they have fed no life but their own, have no investments except dollars and must pay for all the sympathy they get, they are locked in a gray prison which they have built for themselves. Such lives are truly old, even if their bodies are kept

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young by all the skill that money buys. They have lost the fundamental contacts with the world. If we knew the profound loneliness and monotony of many people who have preferred wealth to the burdens and risks of love, we should not dash for the bait which they gorged.

On the other hand love rejuvenates life. When, occasionally, old people take a new plunge into love, they grow so young and dapper that everybody laughs. We can watch the same wonder when a child comes to people who have longed for one for years. So love is the fountain of youth which the Spanish conquistadores sought. It was located in America after all, but, being "conquerors," they could never have found it.

Jesus said that love is the supreme law of life and the thing men live by. Love validates the assertion. It pays as it goes.

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Nothing else does pay in the long run. The more true happiness and abiding satisfaction we have had from love, the more ought we to trust it as the true way of life.

### THE OUTCOME

If, now, love is so all-pervasive and manifold in the life of humanity; if it is indeed the indispensable condition for the existence and progress of society; if it has proved its constructive value and superior efficiency whenever it has received a fair test, then I ask all who have followed these thoughts to the end to affirm with me their faith in love and to make a new committal to the cause of establishing love on earth. We must not only accept it and enjoy it when it comes to us, but we must seek it, cultivate it and propagate it like health, wealth and education. It is not an incidental blessing, but the first and fundamental law of

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God, written in our hearts, and written large in all the world about us. When we heal love that has been torn, remove all contradictions of love from the outward relations of our life and allow love to become our second nature, we shall deserve the highest patent of nobility — to be called sons of God. If love involves loss, we must accept the loss. „Christ did. If selfishness seems to work better than love, we must have faith in love. Just as a business man invests money for years in a business proposition because he has faith in it, so we must stake our fortune on love and feel sure of coming out ahead in the venture. Why else do we call ourselves Christians?

### LOVE AND CHRISTIANITY

From this sunlit hill-top of reflection we may gain a fresh vision of the significance of Christianity.

A man is a Christian in the



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degree in which he shares the spirit and consciousness of Jesus Christ, conceiving God as Jesus knew him and seeing human life as Jesus realized it. None of us has ever done this fully, but on the other hand there is no man within the domain of Christendom who has not been influenced by Christ in some way.

Now Jesus with incomparable spiritual energy set love into the center of religion. He drove home the duty of love with words so mighty that our race can never again forget them. He embodied the principle of love in the undying charm and youthful strength of his own life in such a way as to exert an assimilating compulsion over more lives than we can number. He was conscious of God as a sunny and lovable presence and he taught his friends to think of God as a father who loved them unselfishly and wanted nothing from

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them except love. This conception of God was reenforced when men saw in the cross the great declaration of the redemptive love of God.

As the outcome of the life and death of Jesus, a body of organized life and thought was set in motion through history which interpreted the universe from the point of view of love and saw all ethical questions and duties with love at the center. If this movement had died out in the second century but its literature had been preserved, all thoughtful men today, of every school of philosophy, would point to it as the fairest and most brilliant venture ever made in the field of morals and religion. But it did not die. It has such religious vitality and organizing force that it survived and spread. Though only a fragment of its original faith was dissolved and embodied in the institutions of society, it made the nations that adopted it

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the dominant nations of the earth. Every time that faith was cleansed of its foreign contaminations, every time more of its force was released and embodied in social life, the history of Western civilization dated a new epoch. In spite of all failures the Christian religion has been the one organized force in the Western world which has consciously sought to increase love.

(Christianity stands for the belief that "God is love.") It has succeeded in making that tremendous assertion of faith a commonplace. In so far as we have taken that doctrine seriously it has revolutionized our spiritual outlook and put a new face on the universe.)

(Christianity stands for the doctrine that we must love one another — all men, without distinction of "religion, race, color or previous condition of servitude." It will tolerate no exempt breed of supermen and no preempted

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areas of God's common world. It does not call on the strong to climb to isolation across the backs of the weak, but challenges them to prove their strength by lifting the rest with them. It does not advise eliminating the unfit, but seeks to make them fit. It stands for the solidarity of the race in its weakness and strength, its defeats and conquests, its sin and salvation.)

If love is the greatest thing in the world and if it is the prime condition of social progress, what of the Christian religion, which has identified itself with faith in love?

Every man can profit by the historical influences of Christianity and be a passive pensioner on its vested funds. But it clearly needs active personal agents who will incarnate its vitalities, propagate its principles, liberate its undeveloped forces, purify its doctrine

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and extend the sway of its faith in love over new realms of social life. Dare we be such men? Dare we be Christians? Those who take up the propaganda of love and substitute freedom and fraternity for coercion and class differences in social life are the pioneers of the Kingdom of God; for the reign of the God of love will be fulfilled in a life of humanity organized on the basis of solidarity and love.















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well passed away. The Protectorate came to an end. England decided that it had had enough of Puritans and republicans, and would give the Stuarts and the Established Church another trial. A necessary consequence was the revival of the Act of Uniformity. The Independents were not meek like the Baptists, using no weapons to oppose what they disapproved but passive resistance. The same motives which had determined the original constitution of a Church combining the characters of Protestant and Catholic, instead of leaving religion free, were even more powerful at the Restoration than they had been at the accession of Elizabeth. Before toleration is possible, men must have learnt to tolerate toleration itself; and in times of violent convictions, toleration is looked on as indifference, and indifference as Atheism in disguise. Catholics and Protestants, Churchmen and Dissenters, regarded one another as enemies of God and the State, with whom no peace was possible. Toleration had been tried by the Valois princes in France. Church and chapel had been the rendezvous of armed fanatics. The preachers blew the war-trumpet, and every town and village had been the scene of furious conflicts, which culminated in the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. The same result would have followed in England if the same experiment had been ventured. The different communities were forbidden to have their separate places of worship, and services were contrived which moderate men of all sorts could use and interpret after their own convictions. The instrument required to be delicately handled. It succeeded tolerably as long as Elizabeth lived. When Elizabeth died, the balance was no longer fairly kept. The High-Church party obtained the ascendancy, and abused their power. Tyranny brought revolution, and the Catholic element in turn disappeared.

The Bishops were displaced by Presbyterian elders. The Presbyterian elders became in turn "hireling wolves," "old priest" written in new characters. Cromwell had left conscience free to Protestants. But even he had refused equal liberty to Catholics and Episcopalians. He was gone too, and Church and King were back again. How were they to stand? The stern, resolute men, to whom the Commonwealth had been the establishment of God's kingdom upon earth, were as little inclined to keep terms with Antichrist as the Church people had been inclined to keep terms with Cromwell. To have allowed them to meet openly in their conventicles would have been to make over the whole of England to them as a seed-bed in which to plant sedition. It was pardonable, it was even necessary, for Charles II. and his advisers to fall back upon Elizabeth's principles, at least as long as the ashes were still glowing. Indulgence had to be postponed till cooler times. With the Fifth Monarchy men abroad, every chapel, except those of the Baptists, would have been a magazine of explosives.

Under the 35th of Elizabeth, Nonconformists refusing to attend worship in the parish churches were to be imprisoned till they made their submission. Three months were allowed them to consider. If at the end of that time they were still obstinate, they were to be banished the realm; and if they subsequently returned to England without permission from the Crown, they were liable to execution as felons. This Act had fallen with the Long Parliament, but at the Restoration it was held to have revived and to be still in force. The parish churches were cleared of their unordained ministers. The Dissenters' chapels were closed. The people were required by proclamation to be present on Sundays in their proper place.

So the majority of the nation had decided. If they had wished for religious liberty they would not have restored the Stuarts, or they would have insisted on conditions, and would have seen that they were observed.

Venner's plot showed the reality of the danger and justified the precaution.

The Baptists and Quakers might have been trusted to discourage violence, but it was impossible to distinguish among the various sects, whose tenets were unknown and even unsettled. The great body of Cromwell's spiritual supporters believed that armed resistance to a government which they disapproved was not only lawful, but was enjoined.

Thus, no sooner was Charles II. on the throne than the Nonconformists found themselves again under bondage. Their separate meetings were prohibited, and they were not only forbidden to worship in their own fashion, but they had to attend church, under penalties. The Bedford Baptists refused to obey. Their meeting-house in the town was shut up, but they continued to assemble in woods and outhouses; Bunyan preaching to them as before, and going to the place in disguise. Informers were soon upon his track. The magistrates had received orders to be vigilant. Bunyan was the most prominent Dissenter in the neighbourhood. He was too sensible to court martyrdom. He had intended to leave the town till more quiet times, and had arranged to meet a few of his people once more to give them a parting address. It was November 12, 1660. The place agreed on was a house in the village of Samsell, near Harlington. Notice of his intention was privately conveyed to Mr. Wingate, a magistrate in the adjoining district. The constables were set to watch the house, and were directed to bring Bunyan before him.

Some member of the congregation heard of it. Bunyan was warned, and was advised to stay at home that night, or else to conceal himself. His departure had been already arranged; but when he learnt that a warrant was actually out against him, he thought that he was bound to stay and face the danger. He was the first Nonconformist who had been marked for arrest. If he flinched after he had been singled out by name, the whole body of his congregation would be discouraged. Go to church he would not, or promise to go to church; but he was willing to suffer whatever punishment the law might order. Thus, at the time and place which had been agreed on, he was in the room at Samsell, with his Bible in his hand, and was about to begin his address, when the constables entered and arrested him. He made no resistance. He desired only to be allowed to say a few words, which the constables permitted. He then prepared to go with them. He was not treated with any roughness. It was too late to take him that night before the magistrate. His friends undertook for his appearance when he should be required, and he went home with them. The constables came for him again on the following afternoon.

Mr. Wingate, when the information was first brought to him, supposed that he had fallen on a nest of Fifth Monarchy men. He enquired, when Bunyan was brought in, how many arms had been found at the meeting. When he learnt that there were no arms, and that it had no political character whatever, he evidently thought it was a matter of no consequence. He told Bunyan that he had been breaking the law, and asked him why he could not attend to his business. Bunyan said that his object in teaching was merely to persuade people to give up their sins. He could do that and attend to his business also.



Wingate answered that the law must be obeyed. He must commit Bunyan for trial at the Quarter Sessions; but he would take bail for him, if his securities would engage that he would not preach again meanwhile. Bunyan refused to be bailed on any such terms. Preach he would and must, and the recognizances would be forfeited. After such an answer, Wingate could only send him to gaol; he could not help himself. The committal was made out, and Bunyan was being taken away, when two of his friends met him, who were acquainted with Wingate, and they begged the constable to wait. They went in to the magistrate. They told him who and what Bunyan was. The magistrate had not the least desire to be hard, and it was agreed that if he would himself give some general promise of a vague kind he might be let go altogether. Bunyan was called back. Another magistrate who knew him had by this time joined Wingate. They both said that they were reluctant to send him to prison. If he would promise them that he would not call the people together any more, he might go home.

They had purposely chosen a form of words which would mean as little as possible. But Bunyan would not accept an evasion. He said that he would not force the people to come together, but if he was in a place where the people were met, he should certainly speak to them. The magistrate repeated that the meetings were unlawful. They would be satisfied if Bunyan would simply promise that he would not call such meetings. It was as plain as possible that they wished to dismiss the case, and they were thrusting words into his mouth which he could use without a mental reservation; but he persisted that there were many ways in which a meeting might be called; if people came together to hear him, knowing that

he would speak, he might be said to have called them together.

Remonstrances and entreaties were equally useless, and, with extreme unwillingness, they committed him to Bedford gaol to wait for the sessions.

It is not for us to say that Bunyan was too precise. He was himself the best judge of what his conscience and his situation required. To himself, at any rate, his trial was at the moment most severe. He had been left a widower a year or two before, with four young children, one of them blind. He had lately married a second time. His wife was pregnant. The agitation at her husband's arrest brought on premature labour, and she was lying in his house in great danger. He was an affectionate man, and the separation at such a time was peculiarly distressing. After some weeks the Quarter Sessions came on. Bunyan was indicted under the usual form, that he, "being a person of such and such condition, had, since such a time, devilishly and pertinaciously abstained from coming to church to hear Divine service, and was a common upholder of unlawful meetings and conventicles, to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom, contrary to the laws of our Sovereign Lord the King."

There seems to have been a wish to avoid giving him a formal trial. He was not required to plead, and it may have been thought that he had been punished sufficiently. He was asked why he did not go to church? He said that the Prayer-book was made by man; he was ordered in the Bible to pray with the spirit and the understanding, not with the spirit and the Prayer-book. The magistrates, referring to another Act of Parliament, cautioned Bunyan against finding fault with the Prayer-book, or he would

bring himself into further trouble. Justice Keelin, who presided, said (so Bunyan declares, and it has been the standing jest of his biographers ever since) that the Prayer-book had been in use ever since the Apostles' time. Perhaps the words were that parts of it had been then in use (the Apostles' Creed, for instance), and thus they would have been strictly true. However this might be, they told him kindly, as Mr. Wingate had done, that it would be better for him if he would keep to his proper work. The law had prohibited conventicles. He might teach, if he pleased, in his own family and among his friends. He must not call large numbers of people together. He was as impracticable as before, and the magistrates, being but unregenerate mortals, may be pardoned if they found him provoking. If, he said, it was lawful for him to do good to a few, it must be equally lawful to do good to many. He had a gift, which he was bound to use. If it was sinful for men to meet together to exhort one another to follow Christ, he should sin still.

He was compelling the Court to punish him, whether they wished it or not. He describes the scene as if the choice had rested with the magistrates to convict him or to let him go. If he was bound to do his duty, they were equally bound to do theirs. They took his answers as a plea of guilty to the indictment, and Justice Keelin, who was chairman, pronounced his sentence in the terms of the Act. He was to go to prison for three months; if, at the end of three months, he still refused to conform, he was to be transported; and if he came back without license he would be hanged. Bunyan merely answered, "If I were out of prison to-day, I would preach the Gospel again to-morrow." More might have followed, but the gaoler led him away.

There were three gaols in Bedford, and no evidence has been found to show in which of the three Bunyan was confined. Two of them, the county gaol and the town gaol, were large, roomy buildings. Tradition has chosen the third, a small lock-up, fourteen feet square, which stood over the river between the central arches of the old bridge; and as it appears from the story that he had at times fifty or sixty fellow-prisoners, and as he admits himself that he was treated at first with exceptional kindness, it may be inferred that tradition, in selecting the prison on the bridge, was merely desiring to exhibit the sufferings of the Non-conformist martyr in a sensational form, and that he was never in this prison at all. When it was pulled down in 1811, a gold ring was found in the rubbish, with the initials "J. B." upon it. This is one of the "trifles light as air" which carry conviction to the "jealous" only, and is too slight a foundation on which to assert a fact so inherently improbable.

When the three months were over, the course of law would have brought him again to the bar, when he would have had to choose between conformity and exile. There was still the same desire to avoid extremities, and as the day approached, the clerk of the peace was sent to persuade him into some kind of compliance. Various insurrections had broken out since his arrest, and must have shown him, if he could have reflected, that there was real reason for the temporary enforcement of the Act. He was not asked to give up preaching. He was asked only to give up public preaching. It was well known that he had no disposition to rebellion. Even the going to church was not insisted on. The clerk of the peace told him that he might "exhort his neighbours in private discourse," if only he would not bring the people together in numbers,

which the magistrates would be bound to notice. In this way he might continue his usefulness, and would not be interfered with.

Bunyan knew his own freedom from seditious intentions. He would not see that the magistrates could not suspend the law and make an exception in his favour. They were going already to the utmost limit of indulgence. But the more he disapproved of rebellion, the more punctilious he was in carrying out resistance of another kind which he held to be legitimate. He was a representative person, and he thought that in yielding he would hurt the cause of religious liberty. "The law," he said, "had provided two ways of obeying—one to obey actively, and if he could not in conscience obey actively, then to suffer whatever penalty was inflicted on him."

The clerk of the peace could produce no effect. Bunyan rather looked on him as a false friend trying to entangle him. The three months elapsed, and the magistrates had to determine what was to be done. If Bunyan was brought before them, they must exile him. His case was passed over and he was left in prison, where his wife and children were allowed to visit him daily. He did not understand the law or appreciate their forbearance. He exaggerated his danger. At the worst he could only have been sent to America, where he might have remained as long as he pleased. He feared that he might perhaps be hanged.

"I saw what was coming," he said, "and had two considerations especially on my heart—how to be able to endure, should my imprisonment be long and tedious, and how to be able to encounter death should that be my portion. I was made to see that if I would suffer rightly, I must pass sentence of death upon everything that can properly be

called a thing of this life, even to reckon myself, my wife, my children, my health, my enjoyments all as dead to me, and myself as dead to them. Yet I was a man compassed with infirmities. The parting with my wife and poor children hath often been to me in this place (the prison in which he was writing) as the pulling of my flesh from my bones; and that not only because I am too, too fond of those great mercies, but also because I should have often brought to my mind the hardships, miseries, and wants my poor family was like to meet with should I be taken from them, especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all I had besides. Poor child, thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow on thee. But yet, thought I, I must venture all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you. I was as a man who was pulling down his house upon the head of his wife and children. Yet, thought I, I must do it—I must do it. I had this for consideration, that if I should now venture all for God, I engaged God to take care of my concernments. Also, I had dread of the torments of hell, which I was sure they must partake of that for fear of the cross do shrink from their profession. I had this much upon my spirit, that my imprisonment might end in the gallows for aught I could tell. In the condition I now was in I was not fit to die, nor indeed did I think I could if I should be called to it. I feared I might show a weak heart, and give occasion to the enemy. This lay with great trouble on me, for methought I was ashamed to die with a pale face and tottering knees for such a cause as this. The things of God were kept out of my sight. The tempter followed me with, ‘But whither

must you go when you die? What will become of you? What evidence have you for heaven and glory, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified?" Thus was I tossed many weeks; but I felt it was for the Word and way of God that I was in this condition. God might give me comfort or not as He pleased. I was bound, but He was free—yea, it was my duty to stand to His Word, whether He would ever look upon me or no, or save me at the last. Wherefore, thought I, the point being thus, I am for going on and venturing my eternal state with Christ, whether I have comfort here or no. If God does not come in, thought I, I will leap off the ladder even blindfold into eternity, sink or swim, come heaven, come hell. Now was my heart full of comfort."

The ladder was an imaginary ladder, but the resolution was a genuine manly one, such as lies at the bottom of all brave and honourable action. Others who have thought very differently from Bunyan about such matters have felt the same as he felt. Be true to yourself, whatever comes, even if damnation come. Better hell with an honest heart, than heaven with cowardice and insincerity. It was the more creditable to Bunyan, too, because the spectres and hobgoblins had begun occasionally to revisit him.

"Of all temptations I ever met with in my life," he says, "to question the being of God and the truth of His Gospel is the worst, and worst to be borne. When this temptation comes, it takes my girdle from me, and removes the foundation from under me. Though God has visited my soul with never so blessed a discovery of Himself, yet afterwards I have been in my spirit so filled with darkness, that I could not so much as once conceive what that God and that comfort was with which I had been refreshed."

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE BEDFORD GAOL.

THE irregularities in the proceedings against Bunyan had perhaps been suggested by the anticipation of the general pardon which was expected in the following spring. At the coronation of Charles, April 23, 1661, an order was issued for the release of prisoners who were in gaol for any offences short of felony. Those who were waiting their trials were to be let go at once. Those convicted and under sentence might sue out a pardon under the Great Seal at any time within a year from the proclamation. Was Bunyan legally convicted or not? He had not pleaded directly to the indictment. No evidence had been heard against him. His trial had been a conversation between himself and the Court. The point had been raised by his friends. His wife had been in London to make interest for him, and a peer had presented a petition in Bunyan's behalf in the House of Lords. The judges had been directed to look again into the matter at the midsummer assizes. The high-sheriff was active in Bunyan's favour. The Judges Twisden, Chester, and no less a person than Sir Matthew Hale, appear to have concluded that his conviction was legal, that he could not be tried again, and that he must apply for pardon in the regular way. His wife, however, at the instance of the sheriff,



obtained a hearing, and they listened courteously to what she had to say. When she had done, Mr. Justice Twisden put the natural question, whether, if her husband was released, he would refrain from preaching in public for the future. If he intended to repeat his offence immediately that he was at liberty, his liberty would only bring him into a worse position. The wife at once said that he dared not leave off preaching as long as he could speak. The judge asked if she thought her husband was to be allowed to do as he pleased. She said that he was a peaceable person, and wished only to be restored to a position in which he could maintain his family. They had four small children who could not help themselves, one of them being blind, and they had nothing to live upon as long as her husband was in prison but the charity of their friends. Hale remarked that she looked very young to have four children. "I am but mother-in-law to them," she said, "having not been married yet full two years. I was with child when my husband was first apprehended, but being young, I being dismayed at the news fell in labour, and so continued for eight days. I was delivered, but my child died."

Hale was markedly kind. He told her that, as the conviction had been recorded, they could not set it aside. She might sue out a pardon if she pleased, or she might obtain "a writ of error," which would be simple and less expensive.

She left the court in tears—tears, however, which were not altogether tears of suffering innocence. "It was not so much," she said, "because they were so hardhearted against me and my husband, but to think what a sad account such poor creatures would have to give at the coming of the Lord." No doubt both Bunyan and she

thought themselves cruelly injured, and they confounded the law with the administration of it. Persons better informed than they often choose to forget that judges are sworn to administer the law which they find, and rail at them as if the sentences which they are obliged by their oaths to pass were their own personal acts.

A pardon, it cannot be too often said, would have been of no use to Bunyan, because he was determined to persevere in disobeying a law which he considered to be unjust. The most real kindness which could be shown to him was to leave him where he was. His imprisonment was intended to be little more than nominal. His gaoler, not certainly without the sanction of the sheriff, let him go where he pleased; once even so far as London. He used his liberty as he had declared that he would. "I followed my wonted course of preaching," he says, "taking all occasions that were put in my hand to visit the people of God." This was deliberate defiance. The authorities saw that he must be either punished in earnest, or the law would fall into contempt. He admitted that he expected to be "roundly dealt with." His indulgences were withdrawn, and he was put into close confinement.

Sessions now followed sessions, and assizes, assizes. His detention was doubtless irregular, for by law he should have been sent beyond the seas. He petitioned to be brought to trial again, and complained loudly that his petition was not listened to; but no legislator, in framing an Act of Parliament, ever contemplated an offender in so singular a position. Bunyan was simply trying his strength against the Crown and Parliament. The judges and magistrates respected his character, and were unwilling to drive him out of the country; he had himself no wish for liberty on that condition. The only resource,

therefore, was to prevent him forcibly from repeating an offence that would compel them to adopt harsh measures which they were so earnestly trying to avoid.

Such was the world-famous imprisonment of John Bunyan, which has been the subject of so much eloquent declamation. It lasted in all for more than twelve years. It might have ended at any time if he would have promised to confine his addresses to a private circle. It did end after six years. He was released under the first declaration of indulgence; but as he instantly recommenced his preaching, he was arrested again. Another six years went by; he was again let go, and was taken once more immediately after, preaching in a wood. This time he was detained but a few months, and in form more than reality. The policy of the government was then changed, and he was free for the rest of his life.

His condition during his long confinement has furnished a subject for pictures which if correct would be extremely affecting. It is true that, being unable to attend to his usual business, he spent his unoccupied hours in making tags for boot-laces. With this one fact to build on, and with the assumption that the scene of his sufferings was the Bridge Lockhouse, Nonconformist imagination has drawn a "den" for us, "where there was not a yard or a court to walk in for daily exercise;" "a damp and dreary cell;" "a narrow chink which admits a few scanty rays of light to render visible the abode of woe;" "the prisoner, pale and emaciated, seated on the humid earth, pursuing his daily task, to earn the morsel which prolongs his existence and his confinement together. Near him, reclining in pensive sadness, his blind daughter, five other distressed children, and an affectionate wife, whom pinching want and grief have worn down to the gate of death. Ten

summer suns have rolled over the mansion of his misery whose reviving rays have never once penetrated his sad abode," &c., &c.

If this description resembles or approaches the truth, I can but say that to have thus abandoned to want their most distinguished pastor and his family was intensely discreditable to the Baptist community. English prisons in the seventeenth century were not models of good management. But prisoners, whose friends could pay for them, were not consigned to damp and dreary cells; and in default of evidence of which not a particle exists, I cannot charge so reputable a community with a neglect so scandalous. The entire story is in itself incredible. Bunyan was prosperous in his business. He was respected and looked up to by a large and growing body of citizens, including persons of wealth and position in London. He was a representative sufferer fighting the battle of all the Nonconformists in England. He had active supporters in the town of Bedford and among the gentlemen of the county. The authorities, so far as can be inferred from their actions, tried from the first to deal as gently with him as he would allow them to do. Is it conceivable that the Baptists would have left his family to starve; or that his own confinement would have been made so absurdly and needlessly cruel? Is it not far more likely that he found all the indulgences which money could buy and the rules of the prison would allow? Bunyan is not himself responsible for these wild legends. Their real character appears more clearly when we observe how he was occupied during these years.

Friends, in the first place, had free access to him, and strangers who were drawn to him by reputation; while the gaol was considered a private place, and he was al-

lowed to preach there, at least occasionally, to his fellow-prisoners. Charles Doe, a distinguished Nonconformist, visited him in his confinement, and has left an account of what he saw. "When I was there," he writes, "there were about sixty dissenters besides himself, taken but a little before at a religious meeting at Kaistor, in the county of Bedford, besides two eminent dissenting ministers, Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Dun, by which means the prison was much crowded. Yet, in the midst of all that hurry, I heard Mr. Bunyan both preach and pray with that mighty spirit of faith and plerophory of Divine assistance, that he made me stand and wonder. Here they could sing without fear of being overheard, no informers prowling round, and the world shut out."

This was not all. A fresh and more severe Conventicle Act was passed in 1670. Attempts were made to levy fines in the town of Bedford. There was a riot there. The local officers refused to assist in quelling it. The shops were shut. Bedford was occupied by soldiers. Yet, at this very time, Bunyan was again allowed to go abroad through general connivance. He spent his nights with his family. He even preached now and then in the woods. Once, when he had intended to be out for the night, information was given to a clerical magistrate in the neighbourhood, who disliked him, and a constable was sent to ascertain if the prisoners were all within ward. Bunyan had received a hint of what was coming. He was in his place when the constable came; and the governor of the gaol is reported to have said to him, "You may go out when you please, for you know better when to return than I can tell you." Parliament might pass laws, but the execution of them depended on the local authorities. Before the Declaration of Indulgence, the

Baptist church in Bedford was reopened. Bunyan, while still nominally in confinement, attended its meetings. In 1671 he became an Elder; in December of that year he was chosen Pastor. The question was raised whether, as a prisoner, he was eligible. The objection would not have been set aside had he been unable to undertake the duties of the office. These facts prove conclusively that, for a part at least of the twelve years, the imprisonment was little more than formal. He could not have been in the Bridge gaol when he had sixty fellow-prisoners, and was able to preach to them in private. It is unlikely that at any time he was made to suffer any greater hardships than were absolutely inevitable.

But whether Bunyan's confinement was severe or easy, it was otherwise of inestimable value to him. It gave him leisure to read and reflect. Though he preached often, yet there must have been intervals, perhaps long intervals, of compulsory silence. The excitement of perpetual speech-making is fatal to the exercise of the higher qualities. The periods of calm enabled him to discover powers in himself of which he might otherwise have never known the existence. Of books he had but few; for a time only the Bible and Foxe's *Martyrs*. But the Bible thoroughly known is a literature of itself—the rarest and richest in all departments of thought or imagination which exists. Foxe's *Martyrs*, if he had a complete edition of it, would have given him a very adequate knowledge of history. With those two books he had no cause to complain of intellectual destitution. He must have read more, however. He knew George Herbert—perhaps Spenser—perhaps *Paradise Lost*. But of books, except of the Bible, he was at no time a great student. Happily for himself, he had no other book of Divinity, and he needed none.

His real study was human life as he had seen it, and the human heart as he had experienced the workings of it. Though he never mastered successfully the art of verse, he had other gifts which belong to a true poet. He had imagination, if not of the highest, yet of a very high order. He had infinite inventive humour, tenderness, and, better than all, powerful masculine sense. To obtain the use of these faculties he needed only composure, and this his imprisonment secured for him. He had published several theological compositions before his arrest, which have relatively little value. Those which he wrote in prison—even on theological subjects—would alone have made him a reputation as a Nonconformist divine. In no other writings are the peculiar views of Evangelical Calvinism brought out more clearly, or with a more heartfelt conviction of their truth. They have furnished an arsenal from which English Protestant divines have ever since equipped themselves. The most beautiful of them, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, is his own spiritual biography, which contains the account of his early history. The first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* was composed there as an amusement. To this, and to his other works which belong to literature, I shall return in a future chapter.

Visitors who saw him in the gaol found his manner and presence as impressive as his writings. "He was mild and affable in conversation," says one of them, "not given to loquacity or to much discourse, unless some urgent occasion required. It was observed he never spoke of himself or of his talents, but seemed low in his own eyes. He was never heard to reproach or revile any, whatever injury he received, but rather rebuked those who did so. He managed all things with such exactness as if he had made it his study not to give offence."

The final *Declaration of Indulgence* came at last, bringing with it the privilege for which Bunyan had fought and suffered. Charles II. cared as little for liberty as his father or his brother, but he wished to set free the Catholics, and as a step towards it he conceded a general toleration to the Protestant Dissenters. Within two years of the passing of the Conventicle Act of 1670, this and every other penal law against Nonconformists was suspended. They were allowed to open their "meeting-houses" for "worship and devotion," subject only to a few easy conditions. The localities were to be specified in which chapels were required, and the ministers were to receive their licenses from the Crown. To prevent suspicions, the Roman Catholics were for the present excluded from the benefit of the concession. Mass could be said, as before, only in private houses. A year later, the Proclamation was confirmed by Act of Parliament.

Thus Bunyan's long imprisonment was ended. The cause was won. He had been its foremost representative and champion, and was one of the first persons to receive the benefit of the change of policy. He was now forty-four years old. The order for his release was signed on May 8, 1672. His license as pastor of the Baptist chapel at Bedford was issued on the 9th. He established himself in a small house in the town. "When he came abroad," says one, "he found his temporal affairs were gone to wreck, and he had, as to them, to begin again as if he had newly come into the world. But yet he was not destitute of friends who had all along supported him with necessities, and had been very good to his family; so that by their assistance, getting things a little about him again, he resolved, as much as possible, to decline worldly business, and give himself wholly up to the service of God." As



much as possible; but not entirely. In 1685, being afraid of a return of persecution, he made over, as a precaution, his whole estate to his wife: "All and singular his goods, chattels, debts, ready money, plate, rings, household stuff, apparel, utensils, brass, pewter, bedding, and all his other substance." In this deed he still describes himself as a brazier. The language is that of a man in easy, if not ample, circumstances. "Though, by reason of losses which he sustained by imprisonment," says another biographer, "his treasures swelled not to excess, he always had sufficient to live decently and creditably." His writings and his sufferings had made him famous throughout England. He became the actual head of the Baptist community. Men called him, half in irony, half in seriousness, Bishop Bunyan, and he passed the rest of his life honourably and innocently, occupied in writing, preaching, district visiting, and opening daughter churches. Happy in his work, happy in the sense that his influence was daily extending—spreading over his own country, and to the far-off settlements in America, he spent his last years in his own Land of Beulah, Doubting Castle out of sight, and the towers and minarets of Emmanuel Land growing nearer and clearer as the days went on.

He had not detected, or at least, at first, he did not detect, the sinister purpose which lay behind the Indulgence. The exception of the Roman Catholics gave him perfect confidence in the Government, and after his release he published a *Discourse upon Antichrist*, with a preface, in which he credited Charles with the most righteous intentions, and urged his countrymen to be loyal and faithful to him. His object in writing it, he said, "was to testify his loyalty to the King, his love to the brethren, and his service to his country." Antichrist was, of course, the

Pope, the deadliest of all enemies to vital Christianity. To its kings and princes England owed its past deliverance from him. To kings England must look for his final overthrow.

"As the noble King Henry VIII. did cast down the Antichristian worship, so he cast down the laws that held it up; so also did the good King Edward, his son. The brave Queen Elizabeth, also, the sister of King Edward, left of things of this nature, to her lasting fame, behind her." Cromwell he dared not mention—perhaps he did not wish to mention him. But he evidently believed that there was better hope in Charles Stuart than in conspiracy and revolution.

"Kings," he said, "must be the men that shall do down with Antichrist, and they shall do down with her in God's time. God hath begun to draw the hearts of some of them from her already, and He will set them in time against her round about. If, therefore, they do not then work so fast as we would have them, let us exercise patience and hope in God. 'Tis a wonder they go as fast as they do, since the concerns of whole kingdoms lie upon their shoulders, and there are so many Sanballats and Tobias's to flatter them and misinform them. Let the King have visibly a place in your hearts, and with heart and mouth give God thanks for him. He is a better Saviour of us than we may be aware of, and hath delivered us from more deaths than we can tell how to think. We are bidden to give God thanks for all men, and in the first place for kings, and all that are in authority. Be not angry with them—no, not in thy thought. But consider, they go not in the work of Reformation so fast as thou wouldest they should, the fault may be thine. Know that thou also hast thy cold and chill frames of heart, and si

test still when thou shouldest be up and doing. Pray for the long life of the King. Pray that God would give wisdom and judgment to the King; pray that God would discern all plots and conspiracies against his person and government. I do confess myself one of the old-fashioned professors that wish to fear God and honour the King. I am also for blessing them that curse me, for doing good to them that hate me, and for praying for them that spitefully use me and persecute me; and I have had more peace in the practice of these things than all the world are aware of."

The Stuarts, both Charles and James, were grateful for Bunyan's services. The Nonconformists generally went up and down in Royal favour; lost their privileges and regained them as their help was needed or could be dispensed with. But Bunyan was never more molested. He did what he liked. He preached where he pleased, and no one troubled him or called him to account. He was not insincere. His constancy in enduring so long an imprisonment which a word from him would have ended, lifts him beyond the reach of unworthy suspicions. But he disapproved always of violent measures. His rule was to submit to the law; and where, as he said, he could not obey actively, then to bear with patience the punishment that might be inflicted on him. Perhaps he really hoped, as long as hope was possible, that good might come out of the Stuarts.

## CHAPTER VII.

### LIFE AND DEATH OF MR. BADMAN.

To his contemporaries Bunyan was known as the Nonconformist Martyr, and the greatest living Protestant preacher. To us he is mainly interesting through his writings, and especially through *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Although he possessed in a remarkable degree the gift of expressing himself in written words, he had himself no value for literature. He cared simply for spiritual truth, and literature in his eyes was only useful as a means of teaching it. Every thing with which a reasonable man could concern himself was confined within the limits of Christian faith and practice. Ambition was folly. Amusement was idle trifling in a life so short as man's, and with issues so far-reaching depending upon it. To understand, and to make others understand, what Christ had done, and what Christ required men to do, was the occupation of his whole mind, and no object ever held his attention except in connection with it. With a purpose so strict, and a theory of religion so precise, there is usually little play for imagination or feeling. Though we read Protestant theology as a duty, we find it as dry in the mouth as sawdust. The literature which would please must represent nature, and nature refuses to be bound into our dogmatic systems. No object can be pictured truly, except by a mind which has sympathy with it. Shakspeare no more hates Iago

than Iago hates himself. He allows Iago to exhibit himself in his own way, as nature does. Every character, if justice is to be done to it, must be painted at its best, as it appears to itself; and a man impressed deeply with religious convictions is generally incapable of the sympathy which would give him an insight into what he disapproves and dislikes. And yet Bunyan, intensely religious as he was, and narrow as his theology was, is always human. His genius remains fresh and vigorous under the least promising conditions. All mankind being under sin together, he has no favourites to flatter, no opponents to misrepresent. There is a kindliness in his descriptions even of the Evil One's attacks upon himself.

*The Pilgrim's Progress*, though professedly an allegoric story of the Protestant plan of salvation, is conceived in the large, wide spirit of humanity itself. Anglo-Catholic and Lutheran, Calvinist and Deist can alike read it with delight, and find their own theories in it. Even the Romanist has only to blot out a few paragraphs, and can discover no purer model of a Christian life to place in the hands of his children. The religion of *The Pilgrim's Progress* is the religion which must be always and everywhere, as long as man believes that he has a soul and is responsible for his actions; and thus it is that, while theological folios once devoured as manna from Heaven now lie on the bookshelves dead as Egyptian mummies, this book is wrought into the mind and memory of every well-conditioned English or American child; while the matured man, furnished with all the knowledge which literature can teach him, still finds the adventures of Christian as charming as the adventures of Ulysses or Æneas. He sees there the reflexion of himself, the familiar features of his own nature, which remain the same from era to era. Time

cannot impair its interest, or intellectual progress make it cease to be true to experience.

But *The Pilgrim's Progress*, though the best known, is not the only work of imagination which Bunyan produced; he wrote another religious allegory, which Lord Macaulay thought would have been the best of its kind in the world if *The Pilgrim's Progress* had not existed. *The Life of Mr. Badman*, though now scarcely read at all, contains a vivid picture of rough English life in the days of Charles II. Bunyan was a poet, too, in the technical sense of the word; and though he disclaimed the name, and though rhyme and metre were to him as Saul's armour to David, the fine quality of his mind still shows itself in the uncongenial accoutrements.

It has been the fashion to call Bunyan's verse doggerel; but no verse is doggerel which has a sincere and rational meaning in it. Goethe, who understood his own trade, says that the test of poetry is the substance which remains when the poetry is reduced to prose. Bunyan had infinite invention. His mind was full of objects which he had gathered at first-hand, from observation and reflection. He had excellent command of the English language, and could express what he wished with sharp, defined outlines, and without the waste of a word. The rhythmical structure of his prose is carefully correct. Scarcely a syllable is ever out of place. His ear for verse, though less true, is seldom wholly at fault, and, whether in prose or verse, he had the superlative merit that he could never write nonsense. If one of the motives of poetical form be to clothe thought and feeling in the dress in which it can be most easily remembered, Bunyan's lines are often as successful as the best lines of Quarles or George Herbert. Who, for instance, could forget these?—

“Sin is the worm of hell, the lasting fire:  
Hell would soon lose its heat should sin expire;  
Better sinless in hell than to be where  
Heaven is, and to be found a sinner there.”

Or these, on persons whom the world calls men of spirit:—

“Though you dare crack a coward’s crown,  
Or quarrel for a pin,  
You dare not on the wicked frown,  
Or speak against their sin.”

The *Book of Ruth* and the *History of Joseph*, done into blank verse, are really beautiful idylls. The substance with which he worked, indeed, is so good that there would be a difficulty in spoiling it completely; but the prose of the translation in the English Bible, faultless as it is, loses nothing in Bunyan’s hands, and if we found these poems in the collected works of a poet laureate, we should consider that a difficult task had been accomplished successfully. Bunyan felt, like the translators of the preceding century, that the text was sacred, that his duty was to give the exact meaning of it, without epithets or ornaments, and thus the original grace is completely preserved.

Of a wholly different kind, and more after Quarles’s manner, is a collection of thoughts in verse, which he calls a book for boys and girls. All his observations ran naturally in one direction; to minds possessed and governed by religion, nature—be their creed what it may—is always a parable reflecting back their own views.

But how neatly expressed are these *Meditations upon an Egg*:—

“The egg’s no chick by faling from a hen,  
Nor man’s a Christian till he’s born again;

The egg's at first contained in the shell,  
Men afore grace in sin and darkness dwell ;  
The egg, when laid, by warmth is made a chicken,  
And Christ by grace the dead in sin doth quicken ;  
The egg when first a chick the shell's its prison,  
So flesh to soul who yet with Christ is risen."

Or this, *On a Swallow* :—

"This pretty bird! Oh, how she flies and sings ;  
But could she do so if she had not wings ?  
Her wings bespeak my faith, her songs my peace ;  
When I believe and sing, my doubtings cease.

Though the Globe Theatre was, in the opinion of Non-conformists, "the heart of Satan's empire," Bunyan must yet have known something of Shakspeare. In the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* we find :—

"Who would true valour see,  
Let him come hither ;  
One here will constant be,  
Come wind, come weather."

The resemblance to the song in *As You Like It* is too near to be accidental :—

"Who doth ambition shun,  
And loves to be in the sun ;  
Seeking the food he eats,  
And pleased with what he gets,  
Come hither, come hither, come hither.  
Here shall be no enemy,  
Save winter and rough weather."

Bunyan may, perhaps, have heard the lines, and the rhymes may have clung to him without his knowing whence they came. But he would never have been heard of outside his own communion, if his imagination had found no better form of expression for itself than verse.



His especial gift was for allegory, the single form of imaginative fiction which he would not have considered trivial, and his especial instrument was plain, unaffected Saxon prose. *The Holy War* is a people's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* in one. The *Life of Mr. Badman* is a didactic tale, describing the career of a vulgar, middle-class, unprincipled scoundrel.

These are properly Bunyan's "works," the results of his life, so far as it affects the present generation of Englishmen; and as they are little known, I shall give an account of each of them.

The *Life of Badman* is presented as a dialogue between Mr. Wiseman and Mr. Attentive. Mr. Wiseman tells the story, Mr. Attentive comments upon it. The names recall Bunyan's well-known manner. The figures stand for typical characters; but as the *dramatis personæ* of many writers of fiction, while professing to be beings of flesh and blood, are no more than shadows, so Bunyan's shadows are solid men, whom we can feel and handle.

Mr. Badman is, of course, one of the "reprobate." Bunyan considered theoretically that a reprobate may to outward appearance have the graces of a saint, and that there may be little in his conduct to mark his true character. A reprobate may be sorry for his sins, he may repent and lead a good life. He may reverence good men, and may try to resemble them; he may pray, and his prayers may be answered; he may have the spirit of God, and may receive another heart, and yet he may be under the covenant of works, and may be eternally lost. This Bunyan could say while he was writing theology; but art has its rules as well as its more serious sister, and when he had to draw a living specimen, he drew him as he had seen him in his own Bedford neighbourhood.

Badman showed from childhood a propensity for evil. He was so "addicted to lying that his parents could not distinguish when he was speaking the truth. He would invent, tell, and stand to the lies which he invented, with such an audacious face, that one might read in his very countenance the symptoms of a hard and desperate heart. It was not the fault of his parents; they were much dejected at the beginnings of their son; nor did he want counsel and correction, if that would have made him better; but all availed nothing."

Lying was not Badman's only fault. He took to pilfering and stealing. He robbed his neighbours' orchards. He picked up money if he found it lying about. Especially, Mr. Wiseman notes that he hated Sundays. "Reading Scriptures, godly conferences, repeating of sermons and prayers, were things that he could not away with." "He was an enemy to that day, because more restraint was laid upon him from his own ways than was possible on any other." Mr. Wiseman never doubts that the Puritan Sunday ought to have been appreciated by little boys. If a child disliked it, the cause could only be his own wickedness. Young Badman "was greatly given also to swearing and cursing." "He made no more of it" than Mr. Wiseman made "of telling his fingers." "He counted it a glory to swear and curse, and it was as natural to him as to eat, drink, or sleep." Bunyan, in this description, is supposed to have taken the picture from himself. But too much may be made of this. He was thinking, perhaps, of what he might have been if God's grace had not preserved him. He himself was saved. Badman is represented as given over from the first. Anecdotes, however, are told of contemporary providential judgments upon swearers, which had much impressed Bunyan. One was of

a certain Dorothy Mately, a woman whose business was to wash rubbish at the Derby lead-mines. Dorothy (it was in the year when Bunyan was first imprisoned) had stolen twopence from the coat of a boy who was working near her. When the boy taxed her with having robbed him, she wished the ground might swallow her up if she had ever touched his money. Presently after, some children, who were watching her, saw a movement in the bank on which she was standing. They called to her to take care, but it was too late. The bank fell in, and she was carried down along with it. A man ran to help her, but the sides of the pit were crumbling round her: a large stone fell on her head; the rubbish followed, and she was overwhelmed. When she was dug out afterwards, the pence were found in her pocket. Bunyan was perfectly satisfied that her death was supernatural. To discover miracles is not peculiar to Catholics. They will be found wherever there is an active belief in immediate providential government.

Those more cautious in forming their conclusions will think, perhaps, that the woman was working above some shaft in the mine, that the crust had suddenly broken, and that it would equally have fallen in, when gravitation required it to fall, if Dorothy Mately had been a saint. They will remember the words about the Tower of Siloam. But to return to Badman.

His father, being unable to manage so unpromising a child, bound him out as an apprentice. The master to whom he was assigned was as good a man as the father could find: upright, God-fearing, and especially considerate of his servants. He never worked them too hard. He left them time to read and pray. He admitted no light or mischievous books within his doors. He was not one of those whose religion "hung as a cloke in his house, and

was never seen on him when he went abroad." His household was as well fed and cared for as himself, and he required nothing of others of which he did not set them an example in his own person.

This man did his best to reclaim young Badman, and was particularly kind to him. But his exertions were thrown away. The good-for-nothing youth read filthy romances on the sly. He fell asleep in church, or made eyes at the pretty girls. He made acquaintance with low companions. He became profligate, got drunk at ale-houses, sold his master's property to get money, or stole it out of the cash-box. Thrice he ran away and was taken back again. The third time he was allowed to go. "The House of Correction would have been the most fit for him, but thither his master was loath to send him, for the love he bore his father."

He was again apprenticed; this time to a master like himself. Being wicked, he was given over to wickedness. The ways of it were not altogether pleasant. He was fed worse and he was worked harder than he had been before; when he stole, or neglected his business, he was beaten. He liked his new place, however, better than the old. "At least, there was no godliness in the house, which he hated worst of all."

So far, Bunyan's hero was travelling the usual road of the Idle Apprentice, and the gallows would have been the commonplace ending of it. But this would not have answered Bunyan's purpose. He wished to represent the good-for-nothing character, under the more instructive aspect of worldly success, which bad men may arrive at as well as good, if they are prudent and cunning. Bunyan gives his hero every chance. He submits him from the first to the best influences; he creates opportunities for re-

penitance at every stage of a long career—opportunities which the reprobate nature cannot profit by, yet increases its guilt by neglecting.

Badman's term being out, his father gives him money and sets him up as a tradesman on his own account. Mr. Attentive considers this to have been a mistake. Mr. Wiseman answers that, even in the most desperate cases, kindness in parents is more likely to succeed than severity, and, if it fails, they will have the less to reproach themselves with. The kindness is, of course, thrown away. Badman continues a loose blackguard, extravagant, idle, and dissolute. He comes to the edge of ruin. His situation obliges him to think; and now the interest of the story begins. He must repair his fortune by some means or other. The easiest way is by marriage. There was a young orphan lady in the neighbourhood, who was well off and her own mistress. She was a "professor," eagerly given to religion, and not so wise as she ought to have been. Badman pretends to be converted. He reforms, or seems to reform. He goes to meeting, sings hymns, adopts the most correct form of doctrine, tells the lady that he does not want her money, but that he wants a companion who will go with him along the road to Heaven. He was plausible, good-looking, and, to all appearance, as absorbed as herself in the one thing needful. The congregation warn her, but to no purpose. She marries him, and finds what she has done too late. In her fortune he has all that he wanted. He swears at her, treats her brutally, brings prostitutes into his house, laughs at her religion, and at length orders her to give it up. When she refuses, Bunyan introduces a special feature of the times, and makes Badman threaten to turn informer, and bring her favourite minister to gaol. The informers were the natu-

ral but most accursed products of the Conventicle Acts. Popular abhorrence relieved itself by legends of the dreadful judgments which had overtaken these wretches.

In St. Neots an informer was bitten by a dog. The wound gangrened, and the flesh rotted off his bones. In Bedford "there was one W.S." (Bunyan probably knew him too well), "a man of very wicked life, and he, when there seemed to be countenance given it, would needs turn informer. Well, so he did, and was as diligent in his business as most of them could be. He would watch at nights, climb trees, and range the woods of days, if possible to find out the meeters, for then they were forced to meet in the fields. Yea, he would curse them bitterly, and swore most fearfully what he would do to them when he found them. Well, after he had gone on like a Bedlam in his course awhile, and had done some mischief to the people, he was stricken by the hand of God. He was taken with a faltering in his speech, a weakness in the back sinews of his neck, that ofttimes he held up his head by strength of hand. After this his speech went quite away, and he could speak no more than a swine or a bear. Like one of them he would gruntle and make an ugly noise, according as he was offended or pleased, or would have anything done. He walked about till God had made a sufficient spectacle of his judgments for his sin, and then, on a sudden, he was stricken, and died miserably."

Badman, says Mr. Wiseman, "had malice enough in his heart" to turn informer, but he was growing prudent and had an eye to the future. As a tradesman he had to live by his neighbours. He knew that they would not forgive him, so "he had that wit in his anger that he did it not." Nothing else was neglected to make the unfortunate wife miserable. She bore him seven children, also typical fig-

ures. "One was a very gracious child, that loved its mother dearly. This child Mr. Badman could not abide, and it oftenest felt the weight of its father's fingers. Three were as bad as himself. The others that remained became a kind of mongrel professors, not so bad as their father nor so good as their mother, but betwixt them both. They had their mother's notions and their father's actions. Their father did not like them because they had their mother's tongue. Their mother did not like them because they had their father's heart and life, nor were they fit company for good or bad. They were forced with Esau to join in affinity with Ishmael—to wit, to look out for a people that were hypocrites like themselves, and with them they matched and lived and died."

Badman, meanwhile, with the help of his wife's fortune, grew into an important person, and his character becomes a curious study. "He went," we are told, "to school with the devil, from his childhood to the end of his life." He was shrewd in matters of business, began to extend his operations, and "drove a great trade." He carried a double face. He was evil with the evil. He pretended to be good with the good. In religion he affected to be a free-thinker, careless of death and judgment, and ridiculing those who feared them "as frightened with unseen bugbears." But he wore a mask when it suited him, and admired himself for the ease with which he could assume whatever aspect was convenient. "I can be religious and irreligious," he said; "I can be anything or nothing. I can swear, and speak against swearing. I can lie, and speak against lying. I can drink, wench, be unclean, and defraud, and not be troubled for it. I can enjoy myself, and am master of my own ways, not they of me. This I have attained with much study, care, and pains." "An

Atheist Badman was, if such a thing as an Atheist could be. He was not alone in that mystery. There was abundance of men of the same mind and the same principle. He was only an arch or chief one among them."

Mr. Badman now took to speculation, which Bunyan's knowledge of business enabled him to describe with instructive minuteness. His adventures were on a large scale, and by some mistakes and by personal extravagance he had nearly ruined himself a second time. In this condition he discovered a means, generally supposed to be a more modern invention, of "getting money by hatfuls."

"He gave a sudden and great rush into several men's debts to the value of four or five thousand pounds, driving at the same time a very great trade by selling many things for less than they cost him, to get him custom and blind his creditors' eyes. When he had well feathered his nest with other men's goods and money, after a little while he breaks; while he had by craft and knavery made so sure of what he had that his creditors could not touch a penny. He sends mournful, sugared letters to them, desiring them not to be severe with him, for he bore towards all men an honest mind, and would pay them as far as he was able. He talked of the greatness of the taxes, the badness of the times, his losses by bad debts, and he brought them to a composition to take five shillings in the pound. His release was signed and sealed, and Mr. Badman could now put his head out-of-doors again, and be a better man than when he shut up shop by several thousands of pounds."

Twice or three times he repeated the same trick with equal success. It is likely enough that Bunyan was drawing from life, and perhaps from a member of his own congregation; for he says that "he had known a professor do it." He detested nothing so much as sham religion,



which was put on as a pretence. "A professor," he exclaims, "and practise such villainies as these! Such an one is not worthy the name. Go, professors, go — leave off profession, unless you will lead your lives according to your profession. Better never profess than make profession a stalking-horse to sin, deceit, the devil, and hell."

Bankruptcy was not the only art by which Badman piled up his fortune. The seventeenth century was not so far behind us as we sometimes persuade ourselves. "He dealt by deceitful weights and measures. He kept weights to buy by, and weights to sell by; measures to buy by, and measures to sell by. Those he bought by were too big, and those he sold by were too little. If he had to do with other men's weights and measures, he could use a thing called sleight of hand. He had the art, besides, to misreckon men in their accounts, whether by weight or measure or money; and if a question was made of his faithful dealing, he had his servants ready that would vouch and swear to his look or word. He would sell goods that cost him not the best price by far, for as much as he sold his best of all for. He had also a trick to mingle his commodity, that that which was bad might go off with the least mistrust. If any of his customers paid him money, he would call for payment a second time, and if they could not produce good and sufficient ground of the payment, a hundred to one but they paid it again."

"To buy in the cheapest market, and sell in the dearest," was Mr. Badman's common rule in business. According to modern political economy, it is the cardinal principle of wholesome trade. In Bunyan's opinion it was knavery in disguise, and certain to degrade and demoralise every one who acted upon it. Bunyan had evidently

thought on the subject. Mr. Attentive is made to object:—

“But you know that there is no settled price set by God upon any commodity that is bought or sold under the sun; but all things that we buy and sell do ebb and flow as to price, like the tide. How then shall a man of tender conscience do, neither to wrong the seller, buyer, nor himself in the buying and selling of commodities?”

Mr. Wiseman answers in the spirit of our old Acts of Parliament, before political economy was invented:—

“Let a man have conscience towards God, charity to his neighbours, and moderation in dealing. Let the tradesman consider that there is not that in great gettings and in abundance which the most of men do suppose; for all that a man has over and above what serves for his present necessity and supply serves only to feed the lusts of the eye. Be thou confident that God’s eyes are upon thy ways; that He marks them, writes them down, and seals them up in a bag against the time to come. Be sure that thou rememberest that thou knowest not the day of thy death. Thou shalt have nothing that thou mayest so much as carry away in thy hand. Guilt shall go with thee if thou hast gotten thy substance dishonestly, and they to whom thou shalt leave it shall receive it to their hurt. These things duly considered, I will shew thee how thou should’st live in the practical part of this art. Art thou to buy or sell? If thou sellest, do not commend. If thou buyest, do not dispraise any otherwise but to give the thing that thou hast to do with its just value and worth. Art thou a seller, and do things grow cheap? set not thy hand to help or hold them up higher. Art thou a buyer, and do things grow dear? use no cunning or deceitful language to pull them down. Leave things to the Providence

of God, and do thou with moderation submit to his hand. Hurt not thy neighbour by crying out, Scarcity, scarcity! beyond the truth of things. Especially take heed of doing this by way of a prognostic for time to come. This wicked thing may be done by hoarding up (food) when the hunger and necessity of the poor calls for it. If things rise, do thou be grieved. Be also moderate in all thy sellings, and be sure let the poor have a pennyworth, and sell thy corn to those who are in necessity; which thou wilt do when thou showest mercy to the poor in thy selling to him, and when thou undersellest the market for his sake because he is poor. This is to buy and sell with a good conscience. The buyer thou wrongest not, thy conscience thou wrongest not, thyself thou wrongest not, for God will surely recompense with thee."

These views of Bunyan's are at issue with modern science, but his principles and ours are each adjusted to the objects of desire which good men in those days, and good men in ours, have respectively set before themselves. If wealth means money, as it is now assumed to do, Bunyan is wrong, and modern science right. If wealth means moral welfare, then those who aim at it will do well to follow Bunyan's advice. It is to be feared that this part of his doctrine is less frequently dwelt upon by those who profess to admire and follow him, than the theory of imputed righteousness or justification by faith.

Mr. Badman, by his various ingenuities, became a wealthy man. His character as a tradesman could not have been a secret from his neighbours, but money and success coloured it over. The world spoke well of him. He became "proud and haughty," took part in public affairs, "counted himself as wise as the wisest in the country, as good as the best, and as beautiful as he that had the most

of it." "He took great delight in praising himself, and as much in the praises that others gave him." "He could not abide that any should think themselves above him, or that their wit and personage should be by others set before his." He had an objection, nevertheless, to being called proud, and when Mr. Attentive asked why, his companion answered with a touch which reminds us of De Foe, that "*Badman did not tell him the reason.* He supposed it to be that which was common to all vile persons. They loved their vice, but cared not to bear its name." Badman said he was unwilling to seem singular and fantastical, and in this way he justified his expensive and luxurious way of living. Singularity of all kinds he affected to dislike, and for that reason his special pleasure was to note the faults of professors. "If he could get anything by the end that had scandal in it—if it did but touch professors, however falsely reported—oh, then he would glory, laugh and be glad, and lay it upon the whole party. Hang these rogues, he would say, there is not a barrel better her-ring in all the holy brotherhood of them. Like to like, quote the devil to the collier. This is your precise crew, and then he would send them all home with a curse."

Thus Bunyan developed his specimen scoundrel, till he brought him to the high altitudes of worldly prosperity; skilful in every villanous art, skilful equally in keeping out of the law's hands, and feared, admired, and respected by all his neighbours. The reader who desires to see Providence vindicated would now expect to find him detected in some crimes by which justice could lay hold, and poetical retribution fall upon him in the midst of his triumph. An inferior artist would certainly have allowed his story to end in this way. But Bunyan, satisfied though he was that dramatic judgments did overtake of-

fenders in this world with direct and startling appropriateness, was yet aware that it was often otherwise, and that the worst fate which could be inflicted on a completely worthless person was to allow him to work out his career unvisited by any penalties which might have disturbed his conscience and occasioned his amendment. He chose to make his story natural, and to confine himself to natural machinery. The judgment to come Mr. Badman laughed at "as old woman's fable," but his courage lasted only as long as he was well and strong. One night, as he was riding home drunk, his horse fell, and he broke his leg. "You would not think," says Mr. Wiseman, "how he swore at first. Then, coming to himself, and finding he was badly hurt, he cried out, after the manner of such, Lord, help me! Lord, have mercy on me! good God, deliver me! and the like. He was picked up and taken home, where he lay some time. In his pain he called on God; but whether it was that his sin might be pardoned, and his soul saved, or whether to be rid of his pain," Mr. Wiseman "could not determine." This leads to several stories of drunkards which Bunyan clearly believed to be literally true. Such facts or legends were the food on which his mind had been nourished. They were in the air which contemporary England breathed.

"I have read, in Mr. Clarke's *Looking-glass for Sinners*, Mr. Wiseman said, "that upon a time a certain drunken fellow boasted in his cups that there was neither heaven nor hell. Also, he said he believed that man had no soul, and that for his own part he would sell his soul to any that would buy it. Then did one of his companions buy it of him for a cup of wine, and presently the devil, in man's shape, bought it of that man again at the same price; and so, in the presence of them all, laid hold of the

soul-seller, and carried him away through the air, so that he was no more heard of."

Again :

"There was one at Salisbury drinking and carousing at a tavern, and he drank a health to the devil, saying that if the devil would not come and pledge him, he could not believe that there was either God or devil. Whereupon his companions, stricken with fear, hastened out of the room; and presently after, hearing a hideous noise and smelling a stinking savour, the vintner ran into the chamber, and coming in he missed his guest, and found the window broken, the iron bars in it bowed and all bloody, but the man was never heard of afterwards."

These visitations were answers to a direct challenge of the evil spirit's existence, and were thus easy to be accounted for. But no devil came for Mr. Badman. He clung to his unfortunate, neglected wife. "She became his dear wife, his godly wife, his honest wife, his duck, his dear and all." He thought he was dying, and hell and all its horrors rose up before him. "Fear was in his face, and in his tossings to and fro he would often say, I am undone, I am undone; my vile life hath undone me!" Atheism did not help him. It never helped anyone in such extremities, Mr. Wiseman said, as he had known in another instance:—

"There was a man dwelt about twelve miles off from us," he said, "that had so trained up himself in his Atheistical notions, that at last he attempted to write a book against Jesus Christ and the Divine authority of the Scriptures. I think it was not printed. Well, after many days God struck him with sickness, whereof he died. So, being sick, and musing of his former doings, the book that he had written tore his conscience as a lion would

tear a kid. Some of my friends went to see him; and as they were in his chamber one day, he hastily called for pen and ink and paper, which, when it was given to him, he took it and writ to this purpose: "I, such an one in such a town, must go to hell-fire for writing a book against Jesus Christ." He would have leaped out of the window to have killed himself, but was by them prevented of that, so he died in his bed by such a death as it was."

Badman seemed equally miserable. But death-bed repentances, as Bunyan sensibly said, were seldom of more value than "the howling of a dog." The broken leg was set again. The pain of body went, and with it the pain of mind. "He was assisted out of his uneasiness," says Bunyan, with a characteristic hit at the scientific views then coming into fashion, "by his doctor," who told him that his alarms had come "from an affection of the brain, caused by want of sleep;" "they were nothing but vapours and the effects of his distemper." He gathered his spirits together, and became the old man once more. His poor wife, who had believed him penitent, broke her heart, and died of the disappointment. The husband gave himself up to loose connections with abandoned women, one of whom persuaded him one day, when he was drunk, to make her a promise of marriage, and she held him to his word. Then retribution came upon him, with the coarse commonplace, yet rigid justice which fact really deals out. The second bad wife avenged the wrongs of the first innocent wife. He was mated with a companion "who could fit him with cursing and swearing, give him oath for oath, and curse for curse. They would fight, and fly at each other like cat and dog." In this condition—for Bunyan, before sending his hero to his account, gave him a protracted spell of earthly discomforts—they lived

sixteen years together. Fortune, who had so long favoured his speculations, turned her back upon him. Between them they "sinned all his wealth away," and at last parted "as poor as howlets."

Then came the end. Badman was still in middle life, and had naturally a powerful constitution; but his "cups and his queans" had undermined his strength. Dropsy came, and gout, with worse in his bowels, and "on the top of them all, as the captain of the men of death that came to take him away," consumption. Bunyan was a true artist, though he knew nothing of the rules, and was not aware that he was an artist at all. He was not to be tempted into spoiling a natural story with the melodramatic horrors of a sinner's death-bed. He had let his victim "howl" in the usual way, when he meant him to recover. He had now simply to conduct him to the gate of the place where he was to receive the reward of his iniquities. It was enough to bring him thither still impenitent, with the grave solemnity with which a felon is taken to execution.

"As his life was full of sin," says Mr. Wiseman, "so his death was without repentance. He had not, in all the time of his sickness, a sight and a sense of his sins; but was as much at quiet as if he had never sinned in his life; he was as secure as if he had been sinless as an angel. When he drew near his end, there was no more alteration in him than what was made by his disease upon his body. He was the self-same Mr. Badman still, not only in name but in condition, and that to the very day of his death and the moment in which he died. There seemed not to be in it to the standers-by so much as a strong struggle of nature. He died like a lamb, or, as men call it, like a chrisom child, quietly and without fear."



To which end of Mr. Badman Bunyan attaches the following remarks: "If a wicked man, if a man who has lived all his days in notorious sin, dies quietly, his quiet dying is so far from being a sign of his being saved that it is an incontestable proof of his damnation. No man can be saved except he repents; nor can he repent that knows not that he is a sinner: and he that knows himself to be a sinner will, I warrant him, be molested for his knowledge before he can die quietly. I am no admirer of sick-bed repentance; for I think verily it is seldom good for anything. But I see that he that hath lived in sin and profaneness all his days, as Badman did, and yet shall die quietly—that is, without repentance steps in between his life and his death—is assuredly gone to hell. When God would show the greatness of his anger against sin and sinners in one word, He saith, Let them alone! Let them alone—that is, disturb them not. Let them go on without control. Let the devil enjoy them peaceably. Let him carry them out of the world, unconverted, quietly. This is the sorest of judgments. I do not say that all wicked men that are molested at their death with a sense of sin and fear of hell do therefore go to heaven; for some are made to see and are left to despair. But I say there is no surer sign of a man's damnation than to die quietly after a sinful life—than to sin and die with a heart that cannot repent. The opinion, therefore, of the common people of this kind of death is frivolous and vain."

So ends this very remarkable story. It is extremely interesting, merely as a picture of vulgar English life in a provincial town, such as Bedford was when Bunyan lived there. The drawing is so good, the details so minute, the conception so unexaggerated, that we are disposed to believe that we must have a real history before us. But such

a supposition is only a compliment to the skill of the composer. Bunyan's inventive faculty was a spring that never ran dry. He had a manner, as I said, like De Foe's, of creating the allusion that we are reading realities, by little touches such as "I do not know;" "He did not tell me this;" or the needless introduction of particulars irrelevant to the general plot such as we always stumble on in life, and writers of fiction usually omit. Bunyan was never prosecuted for libel by Badman's relations, and the character is the corresponding contrast to Christian in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the pilgrim's journey being in the opposite direction to the other place. Throughout we are on the solid earth, amidst real experiences. No demand is made on our credulity by Providential interpositions, except in the intercalated anecdotes which do not touch the story itself. The wicked man's career is not brought to the abrupt or sensational issues so much in favour with ordinary didactic tale-writers. Such issues are the exception, not the rule, and the edifying story loses its effect when the reader turns from it to actual life, and perceives that the majority are not punished in any such way. Bunyan conceals nothing, assumes nothing, and exaggerates nothing. He makes his bad man sharp and shrewd. He allows sharpness and shrewdness to bring him the rewards which such qualities in fact command. Badman is successful, he is powerful; he enjoys all the pleasures which money can buy; his bad wife helps him to ruin, but otherwise he is not unhappy, and he dies in peace. Bunyan has made him a brute, because such men do become brutes. It is the real punishment of brutal and selfish habits. There the figure stands: a picture of a man in the rank of English life with which Bunyan was most familiar, travelling along the primrose path to the everlast-

ing bonfire, as the way to Emmanuel's Land was through the Slough of Despond and the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Pleasures are to be found among the primroses, such pleasures as a brute can be gratified by. Yet the reader feels that, even if there was no bonfire, he would still prefer to be with Christian.

## CHAPTER VIII

### "THE HOLY WAR."

THE supernatural has been successfully represented in poetry, painting, or sculpture, only at particular periods of human history, and under peculiar mental conditions. The artist must himself believe in the supernatural, or his description of it will be a sham, without dignity and without credibility. He must feel himself able, at the same time, to treat the subject which he selects with freedom, throwing his own mind boldly into it, or he will produce, at best, the hard and stiff forms of literal tradition. When Benvenuto Cellini was preparing to make an image of the Virgin, he declares gravely that Our Lady appeared to him, that he might know what she was like; and so real was the apparition that, for many months after, he says that his friends, when the room was dark, could see a faint aureole about his head. Yet Benvenuto worked as if his own brain was partly the author of what he produced, and, like other contemporary artists, used his mistresses for his models, and was no servile copyist of phantoms seen in visions. There is a truth of the imagination, and there is a truth of fact, religion hovering between them, translating one into the other, turning natural phenomena into the activity of personal beings; or giving earthly names and habitations to mere creatures of fancy. Imagination

creates a mythology. The priest takes it and fashions out of it a theology, a ritual, or a sacred history. So long as the priest can convince the world that he is dealing with literal facts he holds reason prisoner, and imagination is his servant. In the twilight, when dawn is coming near but has not yet come; when the uncertain nature of the legend is felt, though not intelligently discerned—imagination is the first to resume its liberty; it takes possession of its own inheritance, it dreams of its gods and demi-gods, as Benevenuto dreamt of the Virgin, and it re-shapes the priest's traditions in noble and beautiful forms. Homer and the Greek dramatists would not have dared to bring the gods upon the stage so freely had they believed Zeus and Apollo were living persons, like the man in the next street, who might call the poet to account for what they were made to do and say; but neither, on the other hand, could they have been actively conscious that Zeus and Apollo were apparitions, which had no existence except in their own brains.

The condition is extremely peculiar. It can exist only in certain epochs, and in its nature is necessarily transitory. Where belief is consciously gone, the artist has no reverence for his work, and, therefore, can inspire none. The greatest genius in the world could not reproduce another Athene like that of Phidias. But neither must the belief be too complete. The poet's tongue stammers when he would bring beings before us who, though invisible, are awful personal existences, in whose stupendous presence we one day expect to stand. As long as the conviction survives that he is dealing with literal truths, he is safe only while he follows with shoeless feet the letter of the tradition. He dares not step beyond, lest he degrade the Infinite to the human level, and if he is wise he prefers to

content himself with humbler subjects. A Christian artist can represent Jesus Christ as a man because He was a man, and because the details of the Gospel history leave room for the imagination to work. To represent Christ as the Eternal Son in heaven, to bring before us the Persons of the Trinity, consulting, planning, and reasoning, to take us into their everlasting Council-chamber, as Homer takes us into Olympus, will be possible only when Christianity ceases to be regarded as a history of true facts. Till then it is a trespass beyond the permitted limits, and revolts us by the inadequacy of the result. Either the artist fails altogether by attempting the impossible, or those whom he addresses are themselves intellectually injured by an unreal treatment of truths hitherto sacred. They confound the representation with its object, and regard the whole of it as unreal together.

These observations apply most immediately to Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and are meant to explain the unsatisfactoriness of it. Milton himself was only partially emancipated from the bondage of the letter; half in earth, half "pawing to get free," like his own lion. The war in heaven, the fall of the rebel angels, the horrid splendours of Pandemonium seem legitimate subjects for Christian poetry. They stand for something which we regard as real, yet we are not bound to any actual opinions about them. Satan has no claim on reverential abstinence; and Paradise and the Fall of Man are perhaps sufficiently mythic to permit poets to take certain liberties with them. But even so far Milton has not entirely succeeded. His wars of the angels are shadowy. They have no substance, like the battles of Greeks and Trojans, or Centaurs and Lapithæ; and Satan could not be made interesting without touches of a nobler nature—that is, without ceasing to be the Satan of the

Christian religion. But this is not the worst. When we are carried up into heaven, and hear the persons of the Trinity conversing on the mischiefs which have crept into the universe, and planning remedies and schemes of salvation like Puritan divines, we turn away incredulous and resentful. Theologians may form such theories for themselves, if not wisely, yet without offence. They may study the world in which they are placed with the light which can be thrown upon it by the book which they call the Word of God. They may form their conclusions, invent their schemes of doctrine, and commend to their flocks the interpretation of the mystery at which they have arrived. The cycles and epicycles of the Ptolemaic astronomers were imperfect hypotheses, but they were stages on which the mind could rest for a more complete examination of the celestial phenomena. But the poet does not offer us phrases and formulas; he presents to us personalities, living and active, influenced by emotions and reasoning from premises; and when the unlimited and incomprehensible Being whose attributes are infinite, of whom, from the inadequacy of our ideas, we can only speak in negatives, is brought on the stage to talk like an ordinary man, we feel that Milton has mistaken the necessary limits of his art.

When Faust claims affinity with the Erdgeist, the spirit tells him to seek affinities with beings which he can comprehend. The commandment which forbade the representation of God in a bodily form, forbids the poet equally to make God describe his feelings and his purposes. Where the poet would create a character he must himself comprehend it first to its inmost fibre. He cannot comprehend his own Creator. Admire as we may *Paradise Lost*; try as we may to admire *Paradise Regained*; acknowledge

as we must the splendour of the imagery and the stately march of the verse—there comes upon us irresistibly a sense of the unfitness of the subject for Milton's treatment of it. If the story which he tells us is true, it is too momentous to be played with in poetry. We prefer to hear it in plain prose, with a minimum of ornament and the utmost possible precision of statement. Milton himself had not arrived at thinking it to be a legend, a picture, like a Greek Mythology. His poem falls between two modes of treatment and two conceptions of truth; we wonder, we recite, we applaud, but something comes in between our minds and a full enjoyment, and it will not satisfy us better as time goes on.

The same objection applies to *The Holy War* of Bunyan. It is, as I said, a people's version of the same series of subjects—the creation of man, the fall of man, his redemption, his ingratitude, his lapse, and again his restoration. The chief figures are the same, the action is the same, though more varied and complicated, and the general effect is unsatisfactory from the same cause. Prose is less ambitious than poetry. There is an absence of attempts at grand effects. There is no effort after sublimity, and there is consequently a lighter sense of incongruity in the failure to reach it. On the other hand, there is the greater fulness of detail so characteristic of Bunyan's manner; and fulness of detail on a theme so far beyond our understanding is as dangerous as vague grandiloquence. In *The Pilgrim's Progress* we are among genuine human beings. The reader knows the road too well which Christian follows. He has struggled with him in the Slough of Despond. He has shuddered with him in the Valley of the Shadow of Death. He has groaned with him in the dungeons of Doubting Castle. He has



encountered on his journey the same fellow-travellers. Who does not know Mr. Pliable, Mr. Obstinate, Mr. Facing-both-ways, Mr. Feeble Mind, and all the rest? They are representative realities, flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone. "If we prick them, they bleed; if we tickle them, they laugh," or they make us laugh. "They are warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer" as we are. The human actors in *The Holy War* are parts of men—special virtues, special vices: allegories in fact as well as in name, which all Bunyan's genius can only occasionally substantiate into persons. The plot of *The Pilgrim's Progress* is simple. *The Holy War* is prolonged through endless vicissitudes, with a doubtful issue after all, and the incomprehensibility of the Being who allows Satan to defy him so long and so successfully is unpleasantly and harshly brought home to us. True, it is so in life. Evil remains after all that has been done for us. But life is confessedly a mystery. *The Holy War* professes to interpret the mystery, and only restates the problem in a more elaborate form. Man Friday, on reading it, would have asked, even more emphatically, "Why God not kill the devil?" and Robinson Crusoe would have found no assistance in answering him. For these reasons I cannot agree with Macaulay in thinking that, if there had been no *Pilgrim's Progress*, *The Holy War* would have been the first of religious allegories. We may admire the workmanship, but the same undefined sense of unreality which pursues us through Milton's epic would have interfered equally with the acceptance of this. The question to us is if the facts are true. If true, they require no allegories to touch either our hearts or our intellects.

*The Holy War* would have entitled Bunyan to a place among the masters of English literature. It would never

have made his name a household word in every English-speaking family on the globe.

The story, which I shall try to tell in an abridged form, is introduced by a short prefatory poem. Works of fancy, Bunyan tells us, are of many sorts, according to the author's humour. For himself he says to his reader—

"I have something else to do  
Than write vain stories thus to trouble you.  
What here I say some men do know too well;  
They can with tears and joy the story tell.  
The town of Mansoul is well known to many,  
Nor are her troubles doubted of by any  
That are acquainted with those histories  
That Mansoul and her wars anatomize.

"Then lend thine ears to what I do relate  
Touching the town of Mansoul and her state;  
How she was lost, took captive, made a slave,  
And how against him set that should her save,  
Yea, how by hostile ways she did oppose  
Her Lord, and with his enemy did close,  
For they are true; he that will them deny  
Must needs the best of records vilify.

"For my part, I myself was in the town  
Both when 'twas set up and when pulling down.  
I saw Diabolus in his possession,  
And Mansoul also under his oppression:  
Yea, I was there when she him owned for Lord,  
And to him did submit with one accord.

"When Mansoul trampled upon things divine,  
And wallowed in filth as doth a swine,  
When she betook herself unto his arms,  
Fought her Emmanuel, despised his charms;  
Then was I there, and did rejoice to see  
Diabolus and Mansoul so agree.

"Let no man count me then a fable-maker,  
Nor make my name or credit a partaker  
Of their derision. What is here in view  
Of mine own knowledge I dare say is true."

At setting out we are introduced into the famous continent of "Universe," a large and spacious country lying between the two poles—"the people of it not all of one complexion nor yet of one language, mode or way of religion, but differing as much as the planets themselves; some right, some wrong, even as it may happen to be."

In this country of "Universe" was a fair and delicate town and corporation called "Mansoul," a town for its building so curious, for its situation so commodious, for its privileges so advantageous, that with reference to its original (state) there was not its equal under heaven. The first founder was Shaddai, who built it for his own delight. In the midst of the town was a famous and stately palace which Shaddai intended for himself.<sup>1</sup> He had no intention of allowing strangers to intrude there. And the peculiarity of the place was that the walls of Mansoul<sup>2</sup> could never be broken down or hurt unless the townsmen consented. Mansoul had five gates which, in like manner, could only be forced if those within allowed it. These gates were Eargate, Eyegate, Mouthgate, Nosegate, and Feelgate. Thus provided, Mansoul was at first all that its founder could desire. It had the most excellent laws in the world. There was not a rogue or a rascal inside its whole precincts. The inhabitants were all true men.

Now there was a certain giant named Diabolus—king of the blacks or negroes, as Bunyan noticeably calls them

<sup>1</sup> Bunyan says, in a marginal note, that by this palace he means the heart.

<sup>2</sup> The body.

—the negroes standing for sinners or fallen angels. Diabolus had once been a servant of Shaddai, one of the chief in his territories. Pride and ambition had led him to aspire to the crown which was settled on Shaddai's Son. He had formed a conspiracy and planned a revolution. Shaddai and his Son, "being all eye," easily detected the plot. Diabolus and his crew were bound in chains, banished, and thrown into a pit, there to "abide for ever." This was their sentence; but out of the pit, in spite of it, they in some way contrived to escape. They ranged about full of malice against Shaddai, and looking for means to injure him. They came at last on Mansoul. They determined to take it, and called a council to consider how it could best be done. Diabolus was aware of the condition that no one could enter without the inhabitants' consent. Alecto, Apollyon, Beelzebub, Lucifer (Pagan and Christian demons intermixed indifferently) gave their several opinions. Diabolus at length, at Lucifer's suggestion, decided to assume the shape of one of the creatures over which Mansoul had dominion; and he selected as the fittest that of a snake, which at that time was in great favour with the people as both harmless and wise.

The population of Mansoul were simple, innocent folks who believed everything that was said to them. Force, however, might be necessary, as well as cunning, and the Tisiphone, a fury of the Lakes, was required to assist. The attempt was to be made at Eargate. A certain Captain Resistance was in charge of this gate, whom Diabolus feared more than any one in the place. Tisiphone was to shoot him.

The plans being all laid, Diabolus in his snake's dress approached the wall, accompanied by one Ill Pause, a famous orator, the Fury following behind. He asked for a

parley with the heads of the town. Captain Resistance, two of the great nobles, Lord Innocent, and Lord Will be Will, with Mr. Conscience, the Recorder, and Lord Understanding, the Lord Mayor, came to the gate to see what he wanted. Lord Will be Will plays a prominent part in the drama both for good and evil. He is neither Free Will, nor Wilfulness, nor Inclination, but the quality which metaphysicians and theologians agree in describing as "the Will." "The Will" simply—a subtle something of great importance; but what it is they have never been able to explain.

Lord Will be Will inquired Diabolus's business. Diabolus, "meek as a lamb," said he was a neighbour of theirs. He had observed with distress that they were living in a state of slavery, and he wished to help them to be free. Shaddai was no doubt a great prince, but he was an arbitrary despot. There was no liberty where the laws were unreasonable, and Shaddai's laws were the reverse of reasonable. They had a fruit growing among them, in Mansoul, which they had but to eat to become wise. Knowledge was well known to be the best of possessions. Knowledge was freedom; ignorance was bondage; and yet Shaddai had forbidden them to touch this precious fruit.

At that moment Captain Resistance fell dead, pierced by an arrow from Tisiphone. Ill Pause made a flowing speech, in the midst of which Lord Innocent fell also, either through a blow from Diabolus, or "overpowered by the stinking breath of the old villain Ill Pause." The people flew upon the apple-tree; Eargate and Eyegate were thrown open, and Diabolus was invited to come in; when at once he became King of Mansoul, and established himself in the castle.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The heart.

The magistrates were immediately changed. Lord Understanding ceased to be Lord Mayor. Mr. Conscience was no longer left as Recorder. Diabolus built up a wall in front of Lord Understanding's palace, and shut off the light, "so that till Mansoul was delivered the old Lord Mayor was rather an impediment than an advantage to that famous town." Diabolus tried long to bring "Conscience" over to his side, but never quite succeeded. The Recorder became greatly corrupted, but he could not be prevented from now and then remembering Shaddai; and when the fit was on him he would shake the town with his exclamations. Diabolus, therefore, had to try other methods with him. "He had a way to make the old gentleman, when he was merry, unsay and deny what in his fits he had affirmed; and this was the next way to make him ridiculous, and to cause that no man should regard him." To make all secure, Diabolus often said, "Oh, Mansoul, consider that, notwithstanding the old gentleman's rage and the rattle of the high, thundering words, you hear nothing of Shaddai himself." The Recorder had pretended that the voice of the Lord was speaking in him. Had this been so, Diabolus argued that the Lord would have done more than speak. "Shaddai," he said, "valued not the loss nor the rebellion of Mansoul, nor would he trouble himself with calling his town to a reckoning."

In this way the Recorder came to be generally hated, and more than once the people would have destroyed him. Happily his house was a castle near the water-works. When the rabble pursued him, he would pull up the sluices,<sup>1</sup> let in the flood, and drown all about him.

Lord Will be Will, on the other hand, "as high born as any in Mansoul," became Diabolus's principal minister.

<sup>1</sup> Fears.

He had been the first to propose admitting Diabolus, and he was made Captain of the Castle, Governor of the Wall, and Keeper of the Gates. Will be Will had a clerk named Mr. Mind, a man every way like his master, and Mansoul was thus brought "under the lusts" of Will and Intellect. Mr. Mind had in his house some old rent and torn parchments of the law of Shaddai. The Recorder had some more in his study; but to these Will be Will paid no attention, and surrounded himself with officials who were all in Diabolus's interest. He had as deputy one Mr. Affection, "much debauched in his principles, so that he was called Vile Affection." Vile Affection married Mr. Mind's daughter, Carnal Lust, by whom he had three sons—Impudent, Black Mouth, and Hate Reproof; and three daughters—Scorn Truth, Slight Good, and Revenge. All traces of Shaddai were now swept away. His image, which had stood in the market-place, was taken down, and an artist called Mr. No Truth was employed to set up the image of Diabolus in place of it. Lord Lustings—"who never savoured good, but evil"—was chosen for the new Lord Mayor. Mr. Forget Good was appointed Recorder. There were new burgesses and aldermen, all with appropriate names, for which Bunyan was never at a loss—Mr. Incredulity, Mr. Haughty, Mr. Swearing, Mr. Hardheart, Mr. Pitiless, Mr. Fury, Mr. No Truth, Mr. Stand to Lies, Mr. Falsepeace, Mr. Drunkenness, Mr. Cheating, Mr. Atheism, and another; thirteen of them in all. Mr. Incredulity was the eldest, Mr. Atheism the youngest in the company—a shrewd and correct arrangement. Diabolus, on his part, set to work to fortify Mansoul. He built three fortresses—"The Hold of Defiance" at Eyegate, "that the light might be darkened there;" "Midnight Hold" near the old Castle, to keep Mansoul from knowledge of itself; and

"Sweet Sin Hold" in the market-place, that there might be no desire of good there. These strongholds being established and garrisoned, Diabolus thought that he had made his conquest secure.

So far the story runs on firmly and clearly. It is vivid, consistent in itself, and held well within the limits of human nature and experience. But, like Milton, Bunyan is now, by the exigencies of the situation, forced upon more perilous ground. He carries us into the presence of Shaddai himself, at the time when the loss of Mansoul was reported in heaven.

The king, his son, his high lords, his chief captains and nobles were all assembled to hear. There was universal grief, in which the king and his son shared, or rather seemed to share—for at once the drama of the Fall of Mankind becomes no better than a Mystery Play. "Shaddai and his son had foreseen it all long before, and had provided for the relief of Mansoul, though they told not everybody thereof—but because they would have a share in condoling of the misery of Mansoul they did, and that at the rate of the highest degree, bewail the losing of Mansoul"—"thus to show their love and compassion."

*Paradise Lost* was published at the time that Bunyan wrote this passage. If he had not seen it, the coincidences of treatment are singularly curious. It is equally singular, if he had seen it, that Milton should not here at least have taught him to avoid making the Almighty into a stage actor. The Father and Son consult how "to do what they had designed before." They decide that at a certain time, which they preordain, the Son, "a sweet and comely person," shall make a journey into the Universe, and lay a foundation there for Mansoul's deliverance. Milton offends in the scene less than Bunyan; but Milton cannot



persuade us that it is one which should have been represented by either of them. They should have left "plans of salvation" to eloquent orators in the pulpit.

Though the day of deliverance by the method proposed was as yet far off, the war against Diabolus was to be commenced immediately. The Lord Chief Secretary was ordered to put in writing Shaddai's intentions, and cause them to be published.<sup>1</sup> Mansoul, it was announced, was to be put into a better condition than it was in before Diabolus took it.

The report of the Council in Heaven was brought to Diabolus, who took his measures accordingly, Lord Will be Will standing by him and executing all his directions. Mansoul was forbidden to read Shaddai's proclamation. Diabolus imposed a great oath on the townspeople never to desert him; he believed that if they entered into a covenant of this kind Shaddai could not absolve them from it. They "swallowed the engagement as if it had been a sprat in the mouth of a whale." Being now Diabolus's trusty children, he gave them leave "to do whatever their appetites prompted to do." They would thus involve themselves in all kinds of wickedness, and Shaddai's son "being Holy" would be less likely to interest himself for them. When they had in this way put themselves, as Diabolus hoped, beyond reach of mercy, he informed them that Shaddai was raising an army to destroy the town. No quarter would be given, and unless they defended themselves like men they would all be made slaves. Their spirit being roused, he armed them with the shield of unbelief, "calling into question the truth of the Word." He gave them a helmet of hope—"hope of doing well at last, whatever lives they might lead;" for a breastplate a heart

<sup>1</sup> The Scriptures.

as hard as iron, "most necessary for all that hated Shaddai;" and another piece of most excellent armour, "a drunken and prayerless spirit that scorned to cry for mercy." Shaddai, on his side, had also prepared his forces. He will not as yet send his son. The first expedition was to fail, and was meant to fail. The object was to try whether Mansoul would return to obedience. And yet Shaddai knew that it would not return to obedience. Bunyan was too ambitious to explain the inexplicable. Fifty thousand warriors were collected, all chosen by Shaddai himself. There were four leaders—Captain Boanerges, Captain Conviction, Captain Judgment, and Captain Execution—the martial saints, with whom Macaulay thinks Bunyan made acquaintance when he served, if serve he did, with Fairfax. The bearings on their banners were three black thunderbolts—the Book of the Law, wide open, with a flame of fire bursting from it; a burning, fiery furnace; and a fruitless tree with an axe at its root. These emblems represent the terrors of Mount Sinai, the covenant of works which was not to prevail.

The captains come to the walls of Mansoul, and summon the town to surrender. Their words "beat against Eargate, but without force to break it open." The new officials answer the challenge with defiance. Lord Incredulity knows not by what right Shaddai invades their country. Lord Will be Will and Mr. Forget Good warn them to be off before they rouse Diabolus. The townspeople ring the bells and dance on the walls. Will be Will double-bars the gates. Bunyan's genius is at its best in scenes of this kind. "Old Mr. Prejudice, with sixty deaf men," is appointed to take charge of Eargate. At Eargate, too, are planted two guns, called Highmind and

Heady, "cast in the earth by Diabolus's head founder, whose name was Mr. Puffup."

The fighting begins, but the covenant of works makes little progress. Shaddai's captains, when advancing on Mansoul, had fallen in with "three young fellows of promising appearance" who volunteered to go with them—"Mr. Tradition, Mr. Human Wisdom, and Mr. Man's Invention." They were allowed to join, and were placed in positions of trust, the captains of the covenant being apparently wanting in discernment. They were taken prisoners in the first skirmish, and immediately changed sides and went over to Diabolus. More battles follow. The roof of the Lord Mayor's house is beaten in. The law is not wholly ineffectual. Six of the Aldermen, the grosser moral sins—Swearing, Stand to Lies, Drunkenness, Cheating, and others—are overcome and killed. Diabolus grows uneasy, and loses his sleep. Old Conscience begins to talk again. A party forms in the town in favour of surrender, and Mr. Parley is sent to Eargate to treat for terms. The spiritual sins—False Peace, Unbelief, Haughtiness, Atheism—are still unsubdued and vigorous. The conditions offered are that Incredulity, Forget Good, and Will be Will shall retain their offices; Mansoul shall be continued in all the liberties which it enjoys under Diabolus; and a further touch is added which shows how little Bunyan sympathised with modern notions of the beauty of self-government. No new law or officer shall have any power in Mansoul without the people's consent.

Boanerges will agree to no conditions with rebels. Incredulity and Will be Will advise the people to stand by their rights, and refuse to submit to "unlimited" power. The war goes on, and Incredulity is made Diabolus's universal deputy. Conscience and Understanding, the old

Recorder and Mayor, raise a mutiny, and there is a fight in the streets. Conscience is knocked down by a Diabolonian called Mr. Benumming. Understanding had a narrow escape from being shot. On the other hand, Mr. Mind, who had come over to the Conservative side, laid about bravely, tumbled old Mr. Prejudice into the dirt, and kicked him where he lay. Even Will be Will seemed to be wavering in his allegiance to Diabolus. "He smiled, and did not seem to take one side more than another." The rising, however, is put down—Understanding and Conscience are imprisoned, and Mansoul hardens its heart, chiefly "being in dread of slavery," and thinking liberty too fine a thing to be surrendered.

Shaddai's four captains find that they can do no more. The covenant of works will not answer. They send home a petition, "by the hand of that good man Mr. Love to Mansoul," to beg that some new general may come to lead them. The preordained time has now arrived, and Emmanuel himself is to take the command. He, too, selects his captains—Credence and Good Hope, Charity, and Innocence, and Patience; and the captains have their squires, the counterparts of themselves—Promise and Expectation, Pitiful, Harmless, and Suffer Long. Emmanuel's armour shines like the sun. He has forty-four battering-rams and twenty-two slings—the sixty-six books of the Bible—each made of pure gold. He throws up mounds and trenches, and arms them with his rams, five of the largest being planted on Mount Hearken, over against Eargate. Bunyan was too reverent to imitate the Mystery Plays, and introduce a Mount Calvary with the central sacrifice upon it. The sacrifice is supposed to have been already offered elsewhere. Emmanuel offers mercy to Mansoul, and when it is rejected he threatens judgment and terror.

Diabolus, being wiser than man, is made to know that his hour is approaching. He goes in person to Mouthgate to protest and remonstrate. He asks why Emmanuel is come to torment him. Mansoul has disowned Shaddai and sworn allegiance to himself. He begs Emmanuel to leave him to rule his own subjects in peace.

Emmanuel tells him "he is a thief and a liar." "When," Emmanuel is made to say, "Mansoul sinned by hearkening to thy lie, I put in and became a surety to my Father, body for body, soul for soul, that I would make amends for Mansoul's transgressions, and my Father did accept thereof. So, when the time appointed was come, I gave body for body, soul for soul, life for life, blood for blood, and so redeemed my beloved Mansoul. My Father's law and justice, that were both concerned in the threatening upon transgression, are both now satisfied, and very well content that Mansoul should be delivered."

Even against its deliverers, Mansoul was defended by the original condition of its constitution. There was no way into it but through the gates. Diabolus, feeling that Emmanuel still had difficulties before him, withdrew from the wall, and sent a messenger, Mr. Loth to Stoop, to offer alternative terms, to one or other of which he thought Emmanuel might consent. Emmanuel might be titular sovereign of all Mansoul, if Diabolus might keep the administration of part of it. If this could not be, Diabolus requested to be allowed to reside in Mansoul as a private person. If Emmanuel insisted on his own personal exclusion, at least he expected that his friends and kindred might continue to live there, and that he himself might now and then write them letters, and send them presents and messages, "in remembrance of the merry times they had enjoyed together." Finally, he would like

to be consulted occasionally when any difficulties arose in Mansoul.

It will be seen that in the end Mansoul was, in fact, left liable to communications from Diabolus very much of this kind. Emmanuel's answer, however, is a peremptory No. Diabolus must take himself away, and no more must be heard of him. Seeing that there was no other resource, Diabolus resolves to fight it out. There is a great battle under the walls, with some losses on Emmanuel's side, even Captain Conviction receiving three wounds in the mouth. The shots from the gold slings mow down whole ranks of Diabolonians. Mr. Love no Good and Mr. Ill Pause are wounded. Old Prejudice and Mr. Anything run away. Lord Will be Will, who still fought for Diabolus, was never so daunted in his life: "he was hurt in the leg, and limped."

Diabolus, when the fight was over, came again to the gate with fresh proposals to Emmanuel. "I," he said, "will persuade Mansoul to receive thee for their Lord, and I know that they will do it the sooner when they understand that I am thy deputy. I will show them wherein they have erred, and that transgression stands in the way to life. I will show them the Holy Law to which they must conform, even that which they have broken. I will press upon them the necessity of a reformation according to thy law. At my own cost I will set up and maintain a sufficient ministry, besides lecturers, in Mansoul." This obviously means the Established Church. Unable to keep mankind directly in his own service, the devil offers to entangle them in the covenant of works, of which the Church of England was the representative. Emmanuel rebukes him for his guile and deceit. "I will govern Mansoul," he says, "by new laws, new officers, new mo-

tives, and new ways. I will pull down the town and build it again, and it shall be as though it had not been, and it shall be the glory of the whole universe."

A second battle follows. Eargate is beaten in. The Prince's army enters and advances as far as the old Recorder's house, where they knock and demand entrance. "The old gentleman, not fully knowing their design, had kept his gates shut all the time of the fight. He as yet knew nothing of the great designs of Emmanuel, and could not tell what to think." The door is violently broken open, and the house is made Emmanuel's headquarters. The townspeople, with Conscience and Understanding at their head, petition that their lives may be spared; but Emmanuel gives no answer, Captain Boanerges and Captain Conviction carrying terror into all hearts. Diabolus, the cause of all the mischief, had retreated into the castle.<sup>1</sup> He came out at last, and surrendered, and in dramatic fitness he clearly ought now to have been made away with in a complete manner. Unfortunately, this could not be done. He was stripped of his armour, bound to Emmanuel's chariot-wheels, and thus turned out of Mansoul "into parched places in a salt land, where he might seek rest and find none." The salt land proved as insecure a prison for this embarrassing being as the pit where he was to have abode forever.

Meanwhile, Mansoul being brought upon its knees, the inhabitants were summoned into the castle-yard, when Conscience, Understanding, and Will be Will were committed to ward. They and the rest again prayed for mercy, but again without effect. Emmanuel was silent. They drew another petition, and asked Captain Conviction to present it for them. Captain Conviction declined to

<sup>1</sup> The heart.

be an advocate for rebels, and advised them to send it by one of themselves, with a rope about his neck. Mr. Desires Awake went with it. The Prince took it from his hands, and wept as Desires Awake gave it in. Emmanuel bade him go his way till the request could be considered. The unhappy criminals knew not how to take the answer. Mr. Understanding thought it promised well. Conscience and Will be Will, borne down by shame for their sins, looked for nothing but immediate death. They tried again. They threw themselves on Emmanuel's mercy. They drew up a confession of their horrible iniquities. This, at least, they wished to offer to him whether he would pity them or not. For a messenger some of them thought of choosing one Old Good Deed. Conscience, however, said that would never do. Emmanuel would answer, "Is Old Good Deed yet alive in Mansoul? Then let Old Good Deed save it." Desires Awake went again with the rope on his neck, as Captain Conviction recommended. Mr. Wet Eyes went with him, wringing his hands.

Emmanuel still held out no comfort; he promised merely that in the camp the next morning he would give such an answer as should be to his glory. Nothing but the worst was now looked for. Mansoul passed the night in sackcloth and ashes. When day broke, the prisoners dressed themselves in mourning, and were carried to the camp in chains, with ropes on their necks, beating their breasts. Prostrate before Emmanuel's throne, they repeated their confession. They acknowledged that death and the bottomless pit would be no more than a just retribution for their crimes. As they excused nothing and promised nothing, Emmanuel at once delivered them their pardons sealed with seven seals. He took off their ropes



and mourning, clothed them in shining garments, and gave them chains and jewels.

Lord Will be Will "swooned outright." When he recovered, "the Prince" embraced and kissed him. The bells in Mansoul were set ringing. Bonfires blazed. Emmanuel reviewed his army; and Mansoul, ravished at the sight, prayed him to remain and be their King for ever. He entered the city again in triumph, the people strewing boughs and flowers before him. The streets and squares were rebuilt on a new model. Lord Will be Will, now regenerate, resumed the charge of the gates. The old Lord Mayor was reinstated. Mr. Knowledge was made Recorder, "not out of contempt for old Conscience, who was by-and-bye to have another employment." Diabolus's image was taken down and broken to pieces, and the inhabitants of Mansoul were so happy that they sang of Emmanuel in their sleep.

Justice, however, remained to be done on the hardened and impenitent.

There were "perhaps necessities in the nature of things," as Bishop Butler says, and an example could not be made of the principal offender. But his servants and old officials were lurking in the lanes and alleys. They were apprehended, thrown into gaol, and brought to formal trial. Here we have Bunyan at his best. The scene in the court rises to the level of the famous trial of Faithful in *Vanity Fair*. The prisoners were Diabolus's Aldermen—Mr. Atheism, Mr. Incredulity, Mr. Lustings, Mr. Forget Good, Mr. Hardheart, Mr. Falsepeace, and the rest. The proceedings were precisely what Bunyan must have witnessed at a common English Assizes. The Judges were the new Recorder and the new Mayor. Mr. Do-right was Town Clerk. A jury was empanelled in the usual way.

Mr. Knowall, Mr. Telltrue, and Mr. Hatelies were the principal witnesses.

Atheism was first brought to the bar, being charged "with having pertinaciously and doltingly taught that there was no God." He pleaded Not Guilty. Mr. Knowall was placed in the witness-box and sworn.

"My Lord," he said, "I know the prisoner at the bar. I and he were once in Villains' Lane together, and he at that time did briskly talk of diverse opinions. And then and there I heard him say that for his part he did believe that there was no God. 'But,' said he, 'I can profess one and be religious too, if the company I am in and the circumstances of other things,' said he, 'shall put me upon it.'"

Telltrue and Hatelies were next called.

"*Telltrue.* My Lord, I was formerly a great companion of the prisoner's, for the which I now repent me; and I have often heard him say, and with very great stomach-fulness, that he believed there was neither God, Angel, nor Spirit.

"*Town Clerk.* Where did you hear him say so?

"*Telltrue.* In Blackmouth Lane and in Blasphemers' Row, and in many other places besides.

"*Town Clerk.* Have you much knowledge of him?

"*Telltrue.* I know him to be a Diabolonian, the son of a Diabolonian, and a horrible man to deny a Deity. His father's name was Never be Good, and he had more children than this Atheism.

"*Town Clerk.* Mr. Hatelies. Look upon the prisoner at the bar. Do you know him.

"*Hatelies.* My Lord, this Atheism is one of the vilest wretches that ever I came near or had to do with in my life. I have heard him say that there is no God. I have heard him say that there is no world to come, no sin, nor punishment hereafter; and, moreover, I have heard him say that it was as good to go to a bad-house as to go to hear a sermon.

"*Town Clerk.* Where did you hear him say these things?

"*Hatelies.* In Drunkards' Row, just at Rascal Lane's End, at a house in which Mr. Impiety lived."

The next prisoner was Mr. Lustings, who said that he was of high birth, and "used to pleasures and pastimes of greatness." He had always been allowed to follow his own inclinations, and it seemed strange to him that he should be called in question for things which not only he but every man secretly or openly approved.

When the evidence had been heard against him he admitted frankly its general correctness.

"I," he said, "was ever of opinion that the happiest life that a man could live on earth was to keep himself back from nothing that he desired; nor have I been false at any time to this opinion of mine, but have lived in the love of my notions all my days. Nor was I ever so churlish, having found such sweetness in them myself, as to keep the commendation of them from others."

Then came Mr. Incredulity. He was charged with having encouraged the town of Mansoul to resist Shaddai. Incredulity, too, had the courage of his opinions.

"I know not Shaddai," he said. "I love my old Prince. I thought it my duty to be true to my trust, and to do what I could to possess the minds of the men of Mansoul to do their utmost to resist strangers and foreigners, and with might to fight against them. Nor have I nor shall I change my opinion for fear of trouble, though you at present are possessed of place and power."

Forget Good pleaded age and craziness. He was the son of a Diabolonian called Love Naught. He had uttered blasphemous speeches in Allbase Lane, next door to the sign of "Conscience Seared with a Hot Iron;" also in Flesh Lane, right opposite the Church; also in Nauseous Street; also at the sign of the "Reprobate," next door to the "Descent into the Pit."

Falsepeace insisted that he was wrongly named in the

indictment. His real name was Peace, and he had always laboured for peace. When war broke out between Shaddai and Diabolus, he had endeavoured to reconcile them, &c. Evidence was given that Falsepeace was his right designation. His father's name was Flatter. His mother, before she married Flatter, was called Mrs. Sootheup. When her child was born she always spoke of him as Falsepeace. She would call him twenty times a day, my little Falsepeace, my pretty Falsepeace, my sweet rogue Falsepeace! &c.

The court rejected his plea. He was told "that he had wickedly maintained the town of Mansoul in rebellion against its king, in a false, lying, and damnable peace, contrary to the law of Shaddai. Peace that was not a companion of truth and holiness, was an accursed and treacherous peace, and was grounded on a lie.

No Truth had assisted with his own hands in pulling down the image of Shaddai. He had set up the horned image of the beast Diabolus at the same place, and had torn and consumed all that remained of the laws of the king.

Pitiless said his name was not Pitiless, but Cheer Up. He disliked to see Mansoul inclined to melancholy, and that was all his offence. Pitiless, however, was proved to be the name of him. It was a habit of the Diabolonians to assume counterfeit appellations. Covetousness called himself Good Husbandry; Pride called himself Handsome; and so on.

Mr. Haughty's figure is admirably drawn in a few lines. Mr. Haughty, when arraigned, declared "that he had carried himself bravely, not considering who was his foe, or what was the cause in which he was engaged. It was enough for him if he fought like a man and came off victorious."

The jury, it seems, made no distinctions between opinions and acts. They did not hold that there was any divine right in man to think what he pleased, and to say what he thought. Bunyan had suffered as a martyr; but it was as a martyr for truth, not for general licence. The genuine Protestants never denied that it was right to prohibit men from teaching lies, and to punish them if they disobeyed. The persecution of which they complained was the persecution of the honest man by the knave.

All the prisoners were found guilty by a unanimous verdict. Even Mr. Moderate, who was one of the jury, thought a man must be wilfully blind who wished to spare them. They were sentenced to be executed the next day. Incredulity contrived to escape in the night. Search was made for him, but he was not to be found in Mansoul. He had fled beyond the walls, and had joined Diabolus near Hell Gate. The rest, we are told, were crucified—crucified by the hands of the men of Mansoul themselves. They fought and struggled at the place of execution so violently that Shaddai's secretary was obliged to send assistance. But justice was done at last, and all the Diabolonians, except Incredulity, were thus made an end of.

They were made an end of for a time only. Mansoul, by faith in Christ, and by the help of the Holy Spirit, had crucified all manner of sin in its members. It was faith that had now the victory. Unbelief had, unfortunately, escaped. It had left Mansoul for the time, and had gone to its master the devil. But unbelief, being intellectual, had not been crucified with the sins of the flesh, and thus could come back, and undo the work which faith had accomplished. I do not know how far this view approves itself to the more curious theologians. Unbelief itself is

said to be a product of the will; but an allegory must not be cross-questioned too minutely.

The cornucopia of spiritual blessings was now opened on Mansoul. All offences were fully and completely forgiven. A Holy Law and Testament was bestowed on the people for their comfort and consolation, with a portion of the grace which dwelt in the hearts of Shaddai and Emmanuel themselves. They were to be allowed free access to Emmanuel's palace at all seasons, he himself undertaking to hear them and redress their grievances, and they were empowered and enjoined to destroy all Diabolonians who might be found at any time within their precincts.

These grants were embodied in a charter which was set up in gold letters on the castle door. Two ministers were appointed to carry on the government—one from Shaddai's court; the other a native of Mansoul. The first was Shaddai's Chief Secretary, the Holy Spirit. He, if they were obedient and well-conducted, would be "ten times better to them than the whole world." But they were cautioned to be careful of their behaviour, for if they grieved him he would turn against them, and the worst might then be looked for. The second minister was the old Recorder, Mr. Conscience, for whom, as was said, a new office had been provided. The address of Emmanuel to Conscience, in handing his commission to him, contains the essence of Bunyan's creed:

"Thou must confine thyself to the teaching of moral virtues, to civil and natural duties. But thou must not attempt to presume to be a revealer of those high and supernatural mysteries that are kept close in the bosom of Shaddai, my father. For those things knows no man; nor can any reveal them but my father's secretary only. . . .

In all high and supernatural things thou must go to him for information and knowledge. Wherefore keep low and be humble; and remember that the Diabolonians that kept not their first charge, but left their own standing, are now made prisoners in the pit. Be therefore content with thy station. I have made thee my father's vicerent on earth in the things of which I have made mention before. Take thou power to teach them to Mansoul; yea, to impose them with whips and chastisements if they shall not willingly hearken to do thy commandments. . . . And one thing more to my beloved Mr. Recorder, and to all the town of Mansoul. You must not dwell in nor stay upon anything of that which he hath in commission to teach you, as to your trust and expectation of the next world. Of the next world, I say; for I purpose to give another to Mansoul when this is worn out. But for that you must wholly and solely have recourse to and make stay upon the doctrine of your teacher of the first order. Yea, Mr. Recorder himself must not look for life from that which he himself revealeth. His dependence for that must be founded in the doctrine of the other preacher. Let Mr. Recorder also take heed that he receive not any doctrine or points of doctrine that are not communicated to him by his superior teacher, nor yet within the precincts of his own formal knowledge."

Here, as a work of art, *The Holy War* should have its natural end. Mansoul had been created pure and happy. The devil plotted against it, took it, defiled it. The Lord of the town came to the rescue, drove the devil out, executed his officers and destroyed his works. Mansoul, according to Emmanuel's promise, was put into a better condition than that in which it was originally placed. New laws were drawn for it. New ministers were ap-

pointed to execute them. Vice had been destroyed. Unbelief had been driven away. The future lay serene and bright before it; all trials and dangers being safely passed. Thus we have all the parts of a complete drama—the fair beginning, the perils, the struggles, and the final victory of good. At this point, for purposes of art, the curtain ought to fall.

For purposes of art—not, however, for purposes of truth; for the drama of Mansoul was still incomplete, and will remain incomplete till man puts on another nature or ceases altogether to be. Christianity might place him in a new relation to his Maker, and, according to Bunyan, might expel the devil out of his heart. But for practical purposes, as Mansoul too well knows, the devil is still in possession. At intervals—as in the first centuries of the Christian era, for a period in the middle ages, and again in Protestant countries for another period at the Reformation—mankind made noble efforts to drive him out, and make the law of God into reality. But he comes back again, and the world is again as it was. The vices again flourish which had been nailed to the Cross. The statesman finds it as little possible as ever to take moral right and justice for his rule in politics. The Evangelical preacher continues to confess and deplore the desperate wickedness of the human heart. The devil had been deposed, but his faithful subjects have restored him to his throne. The stone of Sisyphus has been brought to the brow of the hill only to rebound again to the bottom. The old battle has to be fought a second time, and, for all we can see, no closing victory will ever be in "this country of Universe." Bunyan knew this but too well. He tries to conceal it from himself by treating Mansoul alternately as the soul of a single individual from which



the devil may be so expelled as never dangerously to come back, or as the collective souls of the Christian world. But, let him mean which of the two he will, the overpowering fact remains that, from the point of view of his own theology, the great majority of mankind are the devil's servants through life, and are made over to him everlastingly when their lives are over; while the human race itself continues to follow its idle amusements and its sinful pleasures as if no Emmanuel had ever come from heaven to rescue it. Thus the situation is incomplete, and the artistic treatment necessarily unsatisfactory—nay, in a sense even worse than unsatisfactory—for the attention of the reader, being reawakened by the fresh and lively treatment of the subject, refuses to be satisfied with conventional explanatory commonplaces. His mind is puzzled; his faith wavers in its dependence upon a Being who can permit His work to be spoilt, His power defied, His victories even, when won, made useless.

Thus we take up the continuation of *The Holy War* with a certain weariness and expectation of disappointment. The delivery of Mansoul has not been finished after all, and, for all that we can see, the struggle between Shaddai and Diabolus may go on to eternity. Emmanuel, before he withdraws his presence, warns the inhabitants that many Diabolonians are still lurking about the outside walls of the town.<sup>1</sup> The names are those in St. Paul's list—Fornication, Adultery, Murder, Anger, Lasciviousness, Deceit, Evil Eye, Drunkenness, Revelling, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Variance, Emulation, Wrath, Strife, Sedition, Heresy. If all these were still abroad, not much had been gained by the crucifixion of the Aldermen. For the time, it was

<sup>1</sup> The Flesh.

true, they did not show themselves openly. Mansoul after the conquest was clothed in white linen, and was in a state of peace and glory. But the linen was speedily soiled again. Mr. Carnal Security became a great person in Mansoul. The Chief Secretary's functions fell early into abeyance. He discovered the Recorder and Lord Will be Will at dinner in Mr. Carnal Security's parlour, and ceased to communicate with them. Mr. Godly Fear sounded an alarm, and Mr. Carnal Security's house was burnt by the mob; but Mansoul's backslidings grew worse. It had its fits of repentance, and petitioned Emmanuel, but the messenger could have no admittance. The Lusts of the Flesh came out of their dens. They held a meeting in the room of Mr. Mischief, and wrote to invite Diabolus to return. Mr. Profane carried their letter to Hell Gate. Cerberus opened it, and a cry of joy ran through the prison. Beelzebub, Lucifer, Apollyon, and the rest of the devils came crowding to hear the news. Deadman's bell was rung. Diabolus addressed the assembly, putting them in hopes of recovering their prize. "Nor need you fear, he said, that if ever we get Mansoul again, we after that shall be cast out any more. It is the law of that Prince that now they own, that if we get them a second time they shall be ours forever." He returned a warm answer to his friend, "which was subscribed as given at the Pit's mouth, by the joint consent of all the Princes of Darkness, by me, Diabolus." The plan was to corrupt Mansoul's morals, and three devils of rank set off disguised to take service in the town, and make their way into the households of Mr. Mind, Mr. Godly Fear, and Lord Will be Will. Godly Fear discovered his mistake, and turned the devil out. The other two established themselves successfully, and Mr. Profane was soon at Hell Gate again to report progress.

Cerberus welcomed him with a "St. Mary, I am glad to see thee." Another council was held in Pandemonium, and Diabolus was impatient to show himself again on the scene. Apollyon advised him not to be in a hurry. "Let our friends," he said, "draw Mansoul more and more into sin—there is nothing like sin to devour Mansoul;" but Diabolus would not wait for so slow a process, and raised an army of Doubters "from the land of Doubting, on the confines of Hell Gate Hill." "Doubt," Bunyan always admitted, had been his own most dangerous enemy.

Happily the towns-people became aware of the peril which threatened them. Mr. Prywell, a great lover of Mansoul, overheard some Diabolonians talking about it at a place called Vile Hill. He carried his information to the Lord Mayor; the Recorder rang the Alarm Bell; Mansoul flew to penitence, held a day of fasting and humiliation, and prayed to Shaddai. The Diabolonians were hunted out, and all that could be found were killed. So far as haste and alarm would permit, Mansoul mended its ways. But on came the Doubting army, led by Incredulity, who had escaped crucifixion—"none was truer to Diabolus than he"—on they came under their several captains, Vocation Doubters, Grace Doubters, Salvation Doubters, &c.; figures now gone to shadow; then the deadliest foes of every English Puritan soul. Mansoul appealed passionately to the Chief Secretary; but the Chief Secretary "had been grieved," and would have nothing to say to it. The town legions went out to meet the invaders with good words, Prayer, and singing of Psalms. The Doubters replied with "horrible objections," which were frightfully effective. Lord Reason was wounded in the head, and the Lord Mayor in the eye; Mr. Mind received a shot in the stomach, and Conscience was hit near the

heart; but the wounds were not mortal. Mansoul had the best of it in the first engagement. Terror was followed by boasting and self-confidence; a night sally was attempted—night being the time when the Doubters were strongest. The sally failed, and the men of Mansoul were turned to rout. Diabolus's army attacked Eargate, stormed the walls, forced their way into the town, and captured the whole of it except the castle. Then "Mansoul became a den of dragons, an emblem of Hell, a place of total darkness." "Mr. Conscience's wounds so festered that he could have no rest day or night." "Now a man might have walked for days together in Mansoul, and scarce have seen one in the town that looked like a religious man. Oh, the fearful state of Mansoul now!" "Now every corner swarmed with outlandish Doubters; Red Coats and Black Coats walked the town by clusters, and filled the houses with hideous noises, lying stories, and blasphemous language against Shaddai and his Son."

This is evidently meant for fashionable London in the time of Charles II. Bunyan was loyal to the King. He was no believer in moral regeneration through political revolution. But none the less he could see what was under his eyes, and he knew what to think of it.

All was not lost, for the castle still held out. The only hope was in Emmanuel, and the garrison proposed to petition again in spite of the ill-reception of their first messengers. Godly Fear reminded them that no petition would be received which was not signed by the Lord Secretary, and that the Lord Secretary would sign nothing which he had not himself drawn up. The Lord Secretary, when appealed to in the proper manner, no longer refused his assistance. Captain Credence flew up to Shaddai's court with the simple words that Mansoul renounced all

trust in its own strength and relied upon its Saviour. This time its prayer would be heard.

The devils, meanwhile, triumphant though they were, discovered that they could have no permanent victory unless they could reduce the castle. "Doubters at a distance," Beelzebub said, "are but like objections repelled by arguments. Can we but get them into the hold, and make them possessors of that, the day will be our own." The object was, therefore, to corrupt Mansoul at the heart.

Then follows a very curious passage. Bunyan had still his eye on England, and had discerned the quarter from which her real danger would approach. Mansoul, the devil perceived, "was a market-town, much given to commerce." "It would be possible to dispose of some of the devil's wares there." The people would be filled full, and made rich, and would forget Emmanuel. "Mansoul," they said, "shall be so cumbered with abundance that they shall be forced to make their castle a warehouse." Wealth once made the first object of existence, "Diabolus's gang will have easy entrance, and the castle will be our own."

Political economy was still sleeping in the womb of futurity. Diabolus was unable to hasten its birth, and an experiment which Bunyan thought would certainly have succeeded was not to be tried. The *Deus ex Machinâ* appeared with its flaming sword. The Doubting army was cut to pieces, and Mansoul was saved. Again, however, the work was imperfectly done. Diabolus, like the bad genius in the fairy tale, survived for fresh mischief. Diabolus flew off again to Hell Gate, and was soon at the head of a new host; part composed of fugitive Doubters whom he rallied, and part of a new set of enemies called *Blood-men*, by whom we are to understand persecutors, "a people from a land that lay under the Dog Star." "Captain

Pope" was chief of the Bloodmen. His escutcheon "was the stake, the flame, and good men in it." The Bloodmen had done Diabolus wonderful service in time past. "Once they had forced Emmanuel out of the Kingdom of the Universe, and why, thought he, might they not do it again?"

Emmanuel did not this time go in person to the encounter. It was enough to send his captains. The Doubtters fled at the first onset. "The Bloodmen, when they saw that no Emmanuel was in the field, concluded that no Emmanuel was in Mansoul. Wherefore, they, looking upon what the captains did to be, as they called it, a fruit of the extravagancy of their wild and foolish fancies, rather despised them than feared them." "They proved, nevertheless, chicken-hearted, when they saw themselves matched and equalled." The chiefs were taken prisoners, and brought to trial like Atheism and his companions, and so, with an address from the Prince, the story comes to a close.

Thus at last *The Holy War* ends, or seems to end. It is as if Bunyan had wished to show that though the converted Christian was still liable to the assaults of Satan, and even to be beaten down and overcome by him, his state was never afterwards so desperate as it had been before the redemption, and that he had assistance ready at hand to save him when near extremity. But the reader whose desire it is that good shall triumph, and evil be put to shame and overthrown, remains but partially satisfied; and the last conflict and its issues leave Mansoul still subject to fresh attacks. Diabolus was still at large. Carnal Sense broke prison, and continued to lurk in the town. Unbelief "was a nimble Jack: him they could never lay hold of, though they attempted to do it often." Unbelief remained in Mansoul till the time that Mansoul ceased to

dwell in the country of the Universe; and where Unbelief was, Diabolus would not be without a friend to open the gates to him. Bunyan says, indeed, that "he was stoned as often as he showed himself in the streets." He shows himself in the streets much at his ease in these days of ours after two more centuries.

Here lies the real weakness of *The Holy War*. It may be looked at either as the war in the soul of each sinner that is saved, or as the war for the deliverance of humanity. Under the first aspect it leaves out of sight the large majority of mankind who are not supposed to be saved, and out of whom, therefore, Diabolus is not driven at all. Under the other aspect the struggle is still unfinished; the last act of the drama has still to be played, and we know not what the conclusion is to be.

To attempt to represent it, therefore, as a work of art, with a beginning, a middle, and an end, is necessarily a failure. The mysteries and contradictions which the Christian revelation leaves unsolved are made tolerable to us by Hope. We are prepared to find in religion many things which we cannot understand; and difficulties do not perplex us so long as they remain in a form to which we are accustomed. To emphasise the problem by offering it to us in an allegory, of which we are presumed to possess a key, serves only to revive Man Friday's question, or the old dilemma which neither intellect nor imagination has ever dealt with successfully. "Deus aut non vult tollere mala, aut nequit. Si non vult non est bonus. Si nequit non est omnipotens." It is wiser to confess with Butler that "there may be necessities in the nature of things which we are not acquainted with."

## CHAPTER IX.

### “THE PILGRIM’S PROGRESS.”

IF *The Holy War* is an unfit subject for allegorical treatment, *The Pilgrim’s Progress* is no less perfectly adapted for it. *The Holy War* is a representation of the struggle of human nature with evil, and the struggle is left undecided. *The Pilgrim’s Progress* is a representation of the efforts of a single soul after holiness, which has its natural termination when the soul quits its mortal home and crosses the dark river. Each one of us has his own life-battle to fight out, his own sorrows and trials, his own failures or successes, and his own end. He wins the game, or he loses it. The account is wound up, and the curtain falls upon him. Here Bunyan had a material as excellent in itself as it was exactly suited to his peculiar genius; and his treatment of the subject from his own point of view—that of English Protestant Christianity—is unequalled, and never will be equalled. I may say never, for in this world of change the point of view alters fast, and never continues in one stay. As we are swept along the stream of time, lights and shadows shift their places, mountain plateaus turn to sharp peaks, mountain ranges dissolve into vapour. The river which has been gliding deep and slow along the plain, leaps suddenly over a precipice and plunges foaming down a sunless gorge.



In the midst of changing circumstances the central question remains the same—What am I? what is this world, in which I appear and disappear like a bubble? who made me? and what am I to do? Some answer or other the mind of man demands and insists on receiving. Theologian or poet offers, at long intervals, explanations which are accepted as credible for a time. They wear out, and another follows, and then another. Bunyan's answer has served average English men and women for two hundred years, but no human being with Bunyan's intellect and Bunyan's sincerity can again use similar language; and *The Pilgrim's Progress* is and will remain unique of its kind—an imperishable monument of the form in which the problem presented itself to a person of singular truthfulness, simplicity, and piety, who, after many struggles, accepted the Puritan creed as the adequate solution of it. It was composed exactly at the time when it was possible for such a book to come into being—the close of the period when the Puritan formula was a real belief, and was about to change from a living principle into an intellectual opinion. So long as a religion is fully alive, men do not talk about it or make allegories about it. They assume its truth as out of reach of question, and they simply obey its precepts as they obey the law of the land. It becomes a subject of art and discourse only when men are unconsciously ceasing to believe, and therefore the more vehemently think that they believe, and repudiate with indignation the suggestion that doubt has found its way into them. After this, religion no longer governs their lives. It governs only the language in which they express themselves, and they preserve it eagerly, in the shape of elaborate observances or in the agreeable forms of art and literature.

*The Pilgrim's Progress* was written before *The Holy War*, while Bunyan was still in prison at Bedford, and was but half conscious of the gifts which he possessed. It was written for his own entertainment, and therefore without the thought—so fatal in its effects and so hard to be resisted—of what the world would say about it. It was written in compulsory quiet, when he was comparatively unexcited by the effort of perpetual preaching, and the shapes of things could present themselves to him as they really were, undistorted by theological narrowness. It is the same story which he has told of himself in *Grace Abounding*, thrown out into an objective form.

He tells us himself, in a metrical introduction, the circumstances under which it was composed:—

"When at the first I took my pen in hand,  
Thus for to write, I did not understand  
That I at all should make a little book  
In such a mode. Nay, I had undertook  
To make another, which when almost done,  
Before I was aware I this begun.

"And thus it was: I writing of the way  
And race of saints in this our Gospel day,  
Fell suddenly into an Allegory  
About the journey and the way to glory  
In more than twenty things which I set down;  
This done, I twenty more had in my crown,  
And these again began to multiply,  
Like sparks that from the coals of fire do fly.  
Nay then, thought I, if that you breed so fast,  
I'll put you by yourselves, lest you at last  
Should prove *ad Infinitum*, and eat out  
The book that I already am about.

"Well, so I did; but yet I did not think  
To show to all the world my pen and ink

In such a mode. I only thought to make,  
I knew not what. Nor did I undertake  
Merely to please my neighbours ; no, not I.  
I did it mine own self to gratify.

“Neither did I but vacant seasons spend  
In this my scribble ; nor did I intend  
But to divert myself in doing this  
From worser thoughts which make me do amiss.  
Thus I set pen to paper with delight,  
And quickly had my thoughts in black and white ;  
For having now my method by the end,  
Still as I pulled it came ; and so I penned  
It down : until at last it came to be  
For length and breadth the bigness which you see.

“Well, when I had thus put my ends together,  
I showed them others, that I might see whether  
They would condemn them or them justify.  
And some said, Let them live ; some, Let them die ;  
Some said, John, print it ; others said, Not so ;  
Some said it might do good ; others said, No.

“Now was I in a strait, and did not see  
Which was the best thing to be done by me.  
At last I thought, since you are thus divided,  
I print it will ; and so the case decided.”

The difference of opinion among Bunyan's friends is easily explicable. The allegoric representation of religion to men profoundly convinced of the truth of it might naturally seem light and fantastic, and the breadth of the conception could not please the narrow sectarians who knew no salvation beyond the lines of their peculiar formulas. The Pilgrim, though in a Puritan dress, is a genuine man. His experience is so truly human experience, that Christians of every persuasion can identify themselves with him ; and even those who regard Chris-

tianity itself as but a natural outgrowth of the conscience and intellect, and yet desire to live nobly and make the best of themselves, can recognise familiar footprints in every step of Christian's journey. Thus *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a book which, when once read, can never be forgotten. We too, every one of us, are pilgrims on the same road, and images and illustrations come back upon us from so faithful an itinerary, as we encounter similar trials, and learn for ourselves the accuracy with which Bunyan has described them. There is no occasion to follow a story minutely which memory can so universally supply. I need pause only at a few spots which are too charming to pass by.

How picturesque and vivid are the opening lines:

"As I walked through the wilderness of this world I lighted on a certain place where there was a den,<sup>1</sup> and I laid me down in that place to sleep, and as I slept I dreamed a dream. I dreamed, and behold I saw a man, a man clothed in rags, standing with his face from his own home with a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back."

The man is Bunyan himself as we see him in *Grace Abounding*. His sins are the burden upon his back. He reads his book and weeps and trembles. He speaks of his fears to his friends and kindred. They think "some frenzy distemper has got into his head." He meets a man in the fields whose name is Evangelist. Evangelist tells him to flee from the City of Destruction. He shows him the way by which he must go, and points to the far-off light which will guide him to the wicket-gate. He sets off, and his neighbours of course think him mad. The world always thinks men mad who turn their backs upon

<sup>1</sup> The Bedford Prison.

it. Obstinate and Pliable (how well we know them both!) follow to persuade him to return. Obstinate talks practical common sense to him, and, as it has no effect, gives him up as a fantastical fellow. Pliable thinks that there may be something in what he says, and offers to go with him.

Before they can reach the wicket-gate they fall into a "miry slough." Who does not know the miry slough too? When a man begins for the first time to think seriously about himself, the first thing that rises before him is a consciousness of his miserable past life. Amendment seems to be desperate. He thinks it is too late to change for any useful purpose, and he sinks into despondency.

Pliable, finding the road disagreeable, has soon had enough of it. He scrambles out of the slough "on the side which was nearest to his own house" and goes home. Christian, struggling manfully, is lifted out "by a man whose name was Help," and goes on upon his journey, but the burden on his back weighs him down. He falls in with Mr. Worldly Wiseman, who lives in the town of Carnal Policy. Mr. Worldly Wiseman, who looks like a gentleman, advises him not to think about his sins. If he has done wrong he must alter his life and do better for the future. He directs him to a village called Morality, where he will find a gentleman well known in those parts, who will take his burden off—Mr. Legality. Either Mr. Legality will do it himself, or it can be done equally well by his pretty young son, Mr. Civility.

The way to a better life does not lie in a change of outward action, but in a changed heart. Legality soon passes into civility, according to the saying that vice loses half its evil when it loses its grossness. Bunyan would have said that the poison was the more deadly from being con-

cealed. Christian, after a near escape, is set straight again. He is admitted into the wicket-gate, and is directed how he is to go forward. He asks if he may not lose his way. He is answered Yes, "There are many ways (that) butt down on this, and they are crooked and wide. But thus thou mayest know the right from the wrong, that only being straight and narrow."

Good people often suppose that when a man is once "converted," as they call it, and has entered on a religious life, he will find everything made easy. He has turned to Christ, and in Christ he will find rest and pleasantness. The path of duty is unfortunately not strewn with flowers at all. The primrose road leads to the other place. As on all other journeys, to persevere is the difficulty. The pilgrim's feet grow sorer the longer he walks. His lower nature follows him like a shadow, watching opportunities to trip him up, and ever appearing in some new disguise. In the way of comfort he is allowed only certain resting-places, quiet intervals of peace when temptation is absent, and the mind can gather strength and encouragement from a sense of the progress which it has made.

The first of these resting-places at which Christian arrives is the "Interpreter's House." This means, I conceive, that he arrives at a right understanding of the objects of human desire as they really are. He learns to distinguish there between passion and patience, passion which demands immediate gratification, and patience which can wait and hope. He sees the action of grace on the heart, and sees the devil labouring to put it out. He sees the man in the iron cage who was once a flourishing professor, but had been tempted away by pleasure and had sinned against light. He hears a dream too—one of Bunyan's

own early dreams, but related as by another person. The Pilgrim himself was beyond the reach of such uneasy visions. But it shows how profoundly the terrible side of Christianity had seized on Bunyan's imagination, and how little he was able to forget it.

"This night as I was in my sleep I dreamed, and behold the heavens grew exceeding black; also it thundered and lightened in most fearful wise, that it put me into an agony; so I looked up in my dream and saw the clouds rack at an unusual rate, upon which I heard a great sound of a trumpet, and saw also a man sit upon a cloud attended with the thousands of heaven. They were all in a flaming fire, and the heaven also was in a burning flame. I heard then a voice, saying, Arise ye dead and come to judgment; and with that the rocks rent, the graves opened, and the dead that were therein came forth. Some of them were exceeding glad and looked upward; some sought to hide themselves under the mountains. Then I saw the man that sate upon the cloud open the book and bid the world draw near. Yet there was, by reason of a fierce flame that issued out and came from before him, a convenient distance betwixt him and them, as betwixt the judge and the prisoners at the bar. I heard it also proclaimed to them that attended on the man that sate on the cloud, Gather together the tares, the chaff, and the stubble, and cast them into the burning lake. And with that the bottomless pit opened just whereabouts I stood, out of the mouth of which there came in an abundant manner smoke and coals of fire with hideous noises. It was also said to the same persons, Gather the wheat into my garner. And with that I saw many caught up and carried away into the clouds, but I was left behind. I also sought to hide myself, but I could not, for the man that sate upon the

cloud still kept his eye upon me. My sins also came into my mind, and my conscience did accuse me on every side. I thought the day of judgment was come, and I was not ready for it."

The resting-time comes to an end. The Pilgrim gathers himself together, and proceeds upon his way. He is not to be burdened for ever with the sense of his sins. It fell from off his back at the sight of the cross. Three shining ones appear and tell him that his sins are forgiven; they take off his rags and provide him with a new suit.

He now encounters fellow-travellers; and the seriousness of the story is relieved by adventures and humorous conversations. At the bottom of a hill he finds three gentlemen asleep, "a little out of the way." These were Simple, Sloth, and Presumption. He tries to rouse them, but does not succeed. Presently two others are seen tumbling over the wall into the Narrow Way. They are come from the land of Vain Glory, and are called Formalist and Hypocrisy. Like the Pilgrim, they are bound for Mount Zion; but the wicket-gate was "too far about," and they had come by a short cut. "They had custom for it a thousand years and more; and custom being of so long standing, would be admitted legal by any impartial judge." Whether right or wrong, they insist that they are in the way, and no more is to be said. But they are soon out of it again. The hill is the hill Difficulty, and the road parts into three. Two go round the bottom, as modern engineers would make them. The other rises straight over the top. Formalist and Hypocrisy choose the easy ways, and are heard of no more. Pilgrim climbs up, and after various accidents comes to the second resting-place, the Palace Beautiful, built by the Lord of the Hill to entertain



strangers in. The recollections of Sir Bevis, of Southampton, furnished Bunyan with his framework. Lions guard the court. Fair ladies entertain him as if he had been a knight-errant in quest of the Holy Grail. The ladies, of course, are all that they ought to be: the Christian graces—Discretion, Prudence, Piety, and Charity. He tells them his history. They ask him if he has brought none of his old belongings with him. He answers Yes, but greatly against his will: his inward and carnal cogitations, with which his countrymen, as well as himself, were so much delighted. Only in golden hours they seemed to leave him. Who cannot recognise the truth of this? Who has not groaned over the follies and idiotcies that cling to us like the doggerel verses that hang about our memories? The room in which he sleeps is called Peace. In the morning he is shown the curiosities, chiefly Scripture relics, in the palace. He is taken to the roof, from which he sees far off the outlines of the Delectable Mountains. Next, the ladies carry him to the armoury, and equip him for the dangers which lie next before him. He is to go down into the Valley of Humiliation, and pass thence through the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

Bunyan here shows the finest insight. To some pilgrims the Valley of Humiliation was the pleasantest part of the journey. Mr. Feeblemind, in the second part of the story, was happier there than anywhere. But Christian is Bunyan himself; and Bunyan had a stiff, self-willed nature, and had found his spirit the most stubborn part of him. Down here he encounters Apollyon himself, “straddling quite over the whole breadth of the way”—a more effective devil than the Diabolus of *The Holy War*. He fights him for half a day, is sorely wounded in head, hand, and foot, and has a near escape of being pressed to death.

Apollyon spreads his bat wings at last, and flies away ; but there remains the Valley of the Shadow of Death, the dark scene of lonely horrors. Two men meet him on the borders of it. They tell him the valley is full of spectres ; and they warn him, if he values his life, to go back. Well Bunyan knew these spectres, those dreary misgivings that he was toiling after an illusion ; that "good" and "evil" had no meaning except on earth, and for man's convenience ; and that he himself was but a creature of a day, allowed a brief season of what is called existence, and then to pass away and be as if he had never been. It speaks well for Bunyan's honesty that this state of mind, which religious people generally call wicked, is placed directly in his Pilgrim's path, and he is compelled to pass through it. In the valley, close at the road-side, there is a pit, which is one of the mouths of hell. A wicked spirit whispers to him as he goes by. He imagines that the thought had proceeded out of his own heart.

The sky clears when he is beyond the gorge. Outside it are the caves where the two giants, Pope and Pagan, had lived in old times. Pagan had been dead many a day. Pope was still living, "but he had grown so crazy and stiff in his joints that he could now do little more than sit in his cave's mouth, grinning at pilgrims as they went by, and biting his nails because he could not come at them."

Here he overtakes Faithful, a true pilgrim like himself. Faithful had met with trials ; but his trials have not resembled Christian's. Christian's difficulties, like Bunyan's own, had been all spiritual. "The lusts of the flesh" seem to have had no attraction for him. Faithful had been assailed by Wanton, and had been obliged to fly from her. He had not fallen into the slough ; but he had been beguiled by the Old Adam, who offered him one of his daugh-

ters for a wife. In the Valley of the Shadow of Death he had found sunshine all the way. Doubts about the truth of religion had never troubled the simpler nature of the good Faithful.

Mr. Talkative is the next character introduced, and is one of the best figures which Bunyan has drawn; Mr. Talkative, with Scripture at his fingers' ends, and perfect master of all doctrinal subtleties, ready "to talk of things heavenly or things earthly, things moral or things evangelical, things sacred or things profane, things past or things to come, things foreign or things at home, things essential or things circumstantial, provided that all be done to our profit."

This gentleman would have taken in Faithful, who was awed by such a rush of volubility. Christian has seen him before, knows him well, and can describe him. "He is the son of one Saywell. He dwelt in Prating Row. He is for any company and for any talk. As he talks now with you, so will he talk when on the ale-bench. The more drink he hath in his crown, the more of these things he hath in his mouth. Religion hath no place in his heart, or home, or conversation; all that he hath lieth in his tongue, and his religion is to make a noise therewith."

The elect, though they have ceased to be of the world, are still in the world. They are still part of the general community of mankind, and share, whether they like it or not, in the ordinary activities of life. Faithful and Christian have left the City of Destruction. They have shaken off from themselves all liking for idle pleasures. They nevertheless find themselves in their journey at Vanity Fair, "a fair set up by Beelzebub 5000 years ago." Trade of all sorts went on at Vanity Fair, and people of all sorts were collected there: cheats, fools, asses, knaves, and

rogues. Some were honest, many were dishonest; some lived peaceably and uprightly, others robbed, murdered, seduced their neighbours' wives, or lied and perjured themselves. Vanity Fair was European society as it existed in the days of Charles II. Each nation was represented. There was British Row, French Row, and Spanish Row. "The wares of Rome and her merchandise were greatly promoted at the fair, only the English nation, with some others, had taken a dislike to them." The pilgrims appear on the scene as the Apostles appeared at Antioch and Rome, to tell the people that there were things in the world of more consequence than money and pleasure. The better sort listen. Public opinion in general calls them fools and Bedlamites. The fair becomes excited, disturbances are feared, and the authorities send to make inquiries. Authorities naturally disapprove of novelties; and Christian and Faithful are arrested, beaten, and put in the cage. Their friends insist that they have done no harm, that they are innocent strangers teaching only what will make men better instead of worse. A riot follows. The authorities determine to make an example of them, and the result is the ever-memorable trial of the two pilgrims. They are brought in irons before my Lord Hategood, charged with "disturbing the trade of the town, creating divisions, and making converts to their opinions in contempt of the law of the Prince."

Faithful begins with an admission which would have made it difficult for Hategood to let him off, for he says that the Prince they talked of, being Beelzebub, the enemy of the Lord, he defied him and all his angels. Three witnesses were then called: Envy, Superstition, and Pickthank.

Envy says that Faithful regards neither prince nor peo-

ple, but does all he can to possess men with disloyal notions, which he calls principles of faith and holiness.

Superstition says that he knows little of him, but has heard him say that "our religion is naught, and such by which no man can please God, from which saying his Lordship well knows will follow that we are yet in our sins, and finally shall be damned."

Pickthank deposes that he has heard Faithful rail on Beelzebub, and speak contemptuously of his honourable friends my Lord Old Man, my Lord Carnal Delight, my Lord Luxurious, my Lord Desire of Vain Glory, my Lord Lechery, Sir Having Greedy, and the rest of the nobility, besides which he has railed against his lordship on the bench himself, calling him an ungodly villain.

The evidence was perfectly true, and the prisoner, when called on for his defence, confirmed it. He says (avoiding the terms in which he was said to rail, and the like) that "the Prince of the town, with all the rabblement of his attendants by this gentleman named, are more fit for a being in hell than in this town or country."

Lord Hategood has been supposed to have been drawn from one or other of Charles II.'s judges, perhaps from either Twisden or Chester, who had the conversation with Bunyan's wife. But it is difficult to see how either one or the other could have acted otherwise than they did. Faithful might be quite right. Hell might be, and probably was, the proper place for Beelzebub, and for all persons holding authority under him. But as a matter of fact, a form of society did for some purpose or other exist, and had been permitted to exist for 5000 years, owning Beelzebub's sovereignty. It must defend itself, or must cease to be, and it could not be expected to make no effort at self-preservation. Faithful had come to Vanity Fair to

make a revolution—a revolution extremely desirable, but one which it was unreasonable to expect the constituted authorities to allow to go forward. It was not a case of false witness. A prisoner who admits that he has taught the people that their Prince ought to be in hell, and has called the judge an ungodly villain, cannot complain if he is accused of preaching rebellion.

Lord Hategood charges the jury, and explains the law. "There was an Act made," he says, "in the days of Pharaoh the Great, servant to our Prince, that lest those of a contrary religion should multiply and grow too strong for him, their males should be thrown into the river. There was also an Act made in the days of Nebuchadnezzar the Great, that whoever would not fall down and worship his golden image should be thrown into a fiery furnace. There was also an Act made in the days of Darius that whoso for some time called upon any God but him should be cast into the lion's den. Now the substance of these laws this rebel hath broken, not only in thought (which is not to be borne), but also in word and deed, which must, therefore, be intolerable. For that of Pharaoh, his law was made upon a supposition to prevent mischief, no crime being yet apparent. For the second and third you see his disputations against our religion, and for the treason he hath confessed he deserveth to die the death."

"Then went the jury out, whose names were Mr. Blindman, Mr. Nogood, Mr. Malice, Mr. Lovelust, Mr. Live loose, Mr. Heady, Mr. Highmind, Mr. Enmity, Mr. Liar, Mr. Cruelty, Mr. Hatelight, and Mr. Implacable, who every one gave in his private verdict against him among themselves, and afterwards unanimously concluded to bring him in guilty before the judge. And first, Mr. Blindman, the

foreman, said: I see clearly that this man is a heretic. Then said Mr. Nogood, Away with such a fellow from the earth. Aye, said Mr. Malice, I hate the very looks of him. Then said Mr. Lovelust, I could never endure him. Nor I, said Mr. Liveloose, for he would always be condemning my way. Hang him, hang him, said Mr. Heady. A sorry scrub, said Mr. Highmind. My heart riseth against him, said Mr. Enmity. He is a rogue, said Mr. Liar. Hanging is too good for him, said Mr. Cruelty. Let us despatch him out of the way, said Mr. Hatelight. Then, said Mr. Implacable, might I have all the world given me, I could not be reconciled to him; therefore, let us forthwith bring him in guilty of death."

Abstract qualities of character were never clothed in more substantial flesh and blood than these jurymen. Spenser's knights in the *Fairy Queen* are mere shadows to them. Faithful was, of course, condemned, scourged, buffeted, lanced in his feet with knives, stoned, stabbed, at last burned, and spared the pain of travelling further on the narrow road. A chariot and horses were waiting to bear him through the clouds, the nearest way to the Celestial Gate. Christian, who it seems had been remanded, contrives to escape. He is joined by Hopeful, a convert whom he has made in the town, and they pursue their journey in company. A second person is useful dramatically, and Hopeful takes Faithful's place. Leaving Vanity Fair, they are again on the Pilgrim's road. There they encounter Mr. Bye-ends. Bye-ends comes from the town of Plain-Speech, where he has a large kindred, My Lord Turnabout, my Lord Timeserver, Mr. Facing-both-ways, Mr. Two Tongues, the parson of the parish. Bye-ends himself was married to a daughter of Lady Feignings. Bunyan's invention in such things was inexhaustible.

They have more trials of the old kind with which Bunyan himself was so familiar. They cross the River of Life and even drink at it, yet for all this, and directly after, they stray into Bye-path Meadow. They lose themselves in the grounds of Doubting Castle, and are seized upon by Giant Despair—still a prey to doubt—still uncertain whether religion be not a dream, even after they have fought with wild beasts in Vanity Fair and have drunk of the water of life. Nowhere does Bunyan show better how well he knew the heart of man. Christian even thinks of killing himself in the dungeons of Doubting Castle. Hopeful cheers him up; they break their prison, recover the road again, and arrive at the Delectable Mountains in Emmanuel's own land. There it might be thought the danger would be over, but it is not so. Even in Emmanuel's Land there is a door in the side of a hill which is a byeway to hell, and beyond Emmanuel's Land is the country of conceit, a new and special temptation for those who think that they are near salvation. Here they encounter "a brisk lad of the neighbourhood," needed soon after for a particular purpose, who is a good liver, prays devoutly, fasts regularly, pays tithes punctually, and hopes that everyone will get to heaven by the religion which he professes, provided he fears God and tries to do his duty. The name of this brisk lad is Ignorance. Leaving him, they are caught in a net by Flatterer, and are smartly whipped by "a shining one," who lets them out of it. False ideas and vanity lay them open once more to their most dangerous enemy. They meet a man coming toward them from the direction in which they are going. They tell him that they are on the way to Mount Zion. He laughs scornfully, and answers:—

"There is no such place as you dream of in all the



world. When I was at home in my own country, I heard as you now affirm, and from hearing I went out to see; and have been seeking this city these twenty years, but I find no more of it than I did the first day I went out. I am going back again, and will seek to refresh myself with things which I then cast away for hopes of that which I now see is not."

Still uncertainty—even on the verge of eternity—strange, doubtless, and reprehensible to Right Reverend persons, who never "cast away" anything; to whom a religious profession has been a highway to pleasure and preferment, who live in the comfortable assurance that as it has been in this life so it will be in the next. Only moral obliquity of the worst kind could admit a doubt about so excellent a religion as this. But Bunyan was not a Right Reverend. Christianity had brought him no palaces and large revenues, and a place among the great of the land. If Christianity was not true, his whole life was folly and illusion, and the dread that it might be so clung to his belief like its shadow.

The way was still long. The pilgrims reach the Enchanted Ground, and are drowsy and tired. Ignorance comes up with them again. He talks much about himself. He tells them of the good motives that come into his mind and comfort him as he walks. His heart tells him that he has left all for God and heaven. His belief and his life agree together, and he is humbly confident that his hopes are well-founded. When they speak to him of Salvation by Faith and Conviction by Sin, he cannot understand what they mean. As he leaves them they are reminded of one Temporary, "once a forward man in religion." Temporary dwelt in Graceless, "a town two miles from Honesty, next door to one Turnback." He

"was going on pilgrimage, but became acquainted with one Save Self, and was never more heard of."

These figures all mean something. They correspond in part to Bunyan's own recollection of his own trials. Partly he is indulging his humour by describing others who were more astray than he was. It was over at last: the pilgrims arrive at the land of Beulah, the beautiful sunset after the storms were all past. Doubting Castle can be seen no more, and between them and their last rest there remains only the deep river over which there is no bridge, the river of Death. On the hill beyond the waters glitter the towers and domes of the Celestial City; but through the river they must first pass, and they find it deeper or shallower according to the strength of their faith. They go through, Hopeful feeling the bottom all along; Christian still in character, not without some horror, and frightened by hobgoblins. On the other side they are received by angels, and are carried to their final home, to live for ever in the Prince's presence. Then follows the only passage which the present writer reads with regret in this admirable book. It is given to the self-righteous Ignorance, who, doubtless, had been provoking with "his good motives that comforted him as he walked;" but Bunyan's zeal might have been satisfied by inflicting a lighter chastisement upon him. He comes up to the river: he crosses without the difficulties which attended Christian and Hopeful. "It happened that there was then at the place one Vain Hope, a Ferryman, that with his boat" (some viaticum or priestly absolution) "helped him over." He ascends the hill, and approaches the city, but no angels are in attendance, "neither did any man meet him with the least encouragement." Above the gate there was the verse written—"Blessed are they that do His commandments,

that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gate into the city." Bunyan, who believed that no man could keep the commandments, and had no right to anything but damnation, must have introduced the words as if to mock the unhappy wretch who, after all, had tried to keep the commandments as well as most people, and was seeking admittance, with a conscience moderately at ease. "He was asked by the men that looked over the gate—Whence come you, and what would you have?" He answered, "I have eaten and drunk in the presence of the King, and he has taught in our street." Then they asked him for his certificate, that they might go in and show it to the king. So he fumbled in his bosom for one, and found none. Then said they, "Have you none?" But the man answered never a word. So they told the king; but he would not come down to see him, but commanded the two shining ones that conducted Christian and Hopeful to the city, to go out and take Ignorance and bind him hand and foot, and have him away. Then they took him up and carried him through the air to the door in the side of the hill, and put him in there. "Then," so Bunyan ends, "I saw that there was a way to hell even from the gates of heaven, as well as from the City of Destruction; so I awoke, and behold it was a dream!"

Poor Ignorance! Hell—such a place as Bunyan imagined hell to be—was a hard fate for a miserable mortal who had failed to comprehend the true conditions of justification. We are not told that he was a vain boaster. He could not have advanced so near to the door of heaven if he had not been really a decent man, though vain and silly. Behold, it was a dream! The dreams which come to us when sleep is deep on the soul may be sent direct

from some revealing power. When we are near waking, the supernatural insight may be refracted through human theory.

Charity will hope that the vision of Ignorance cast bound into the mouth of hell, when he was knocking at the gate of heaven, came through Homer's ivory gate, and that Bunyan here was a mistaken interpreter of the spiritual tradition. The fierce inferences of Puritan theology are no longer credible to us; yet nobler men than the Puritans are not to be found in all English history. It will be well if the clearer sight which enables us to detect their errors enables us also to recognise their excellence.

The second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, like most second parts, is but a feeble reverberation of the first. It is comforting, no doubt, to know that Christian's wife and children were not left to their fate in the City of Destruction. But Bunyan had given us all that he had to tell about the journey, and we do not need a repetition of it. Of course there are touches of genius. No writing of Bunyan's could be wholly without it. But the rough simplicity is gone, and instead of it there is a tone of sentiment which is almost mawkish. Giants, dragons, and angelic champions carry us into a spurious fairy-land, where the knight-errant is a preacher in disguise. Fair ladies and love matches, however decorously chastened, suit ill with the sternness of the moral conflict between the soul and sin. Christiana and her children are tolerated for the pilgrim's sake to whom they belong. Had they appealed to our interest on their own merits, we would have been contented to wish them well through their difficulties, and to trouble ourselves no further about them.

## CHAPTER X.

### LAST DAYS AND DEATH.

LITTLE remains to be told of Bunyan's concluding years. No friends preserved his letters. No diaries of his own survive to gratify curiosity. Men truly eminent think too meanly of themselves or their work to care much to be personally remembered. He lived for sixteen years after his release from the gaol, and those years were spent in the peaceful discharge of his congregational duties, in writing, in visiting the scattered members of the Baptist communion, or in preaching in the villages and woods. His outward circumstances were easy. He had a small but well-provided house in Bedford, into which he collected rare and valuable pieces of old furniture and plate, and other articles—presents, probably, from those who admired him. He visited London annually to preach in the Baptist churches. *The Pilgrim's Progress* spread his fame over England, over Europe, and over the American settlements. It was translated into many languages; and so catholic was its spirit, that it was adapted with a few alterations for the use even of the Catholics themselves. He abstained, as he had done steadily throughout his life, from all interference with politics, and the Government in turn never again meddled with him. He even received offers of promotion to larger spheres of action, which

might have tempted a meaner nature. But he could never be induced to leave Bedford, and there he quietly stayed through changes of ministry, Popish plots, and Monmouth rebellions, while the terror of a restoration of Popery was bringing on the Revolution—careless of kings and cabinets, and confident that Giant Pope had lost his power for harm, and thenceforward could only bite his nails at the passing pilgrims. Once only, after the failure of the Exclusion Bill, he seems to have feared that violent measures might again be tried against him. It is even said that he was threatened with arrest, and it was on this occasion that he made over his property to his wife. The policy of James II., however, transparently treacherous though it was, for the time gave security to the Nonconformist congregations; and in the years which immediately preceded the final expulsion of the Stuarts, liberty of conscience was under fewer restrictions than it had been in the most rigorous days of the Reformation, or under the Long Parliament itself. Thus the anxiety passed away, and Bunyan was left undisturbed to finish his earthly work.

He was happy in his family. His blind child, for whom he had been so touchingly anxious, had died while he was in prison. His other children lived and did well; and his brave companion, who had spoken so stoutly for him to the judges, continued at his side. His health, it was said, had suffered from his confinement; but the only serious illness which we hear of was an attack of "sweating sickness," which came upon him in 1687, and from which he never thoroughly recovered. He was then fifty-nine, and in the next year he died.

His end was characteristic. It was brought on by exposure when he was engaged in an act of charity. A

quarrel had broken out in a family at Reading with which Bunyan had some acquaintance. A father had taken offence at his son, and threatened to disinherit him. Bunyan undertook a journey on horseback from Bedford to Reading in the hope of reconciling them. He succeeded, but at the cost of his life. Returning by London, he was overtaken on the road by a storm of rain, and was wetted through before he could find shelter. The chill, falling on a constitution already weakened by illness, brought on fever. He was able to reach the house of Mr. Strudwick, one his London friends; but he never left his bed afterwards. In ten days he was dead. The exact date is uncertain. It was towards the end of August, 1688, between two and three months before the landing of King William. He was buried in Mr. Strudwick's vault, in the Dissenters' burying-ground at Bunhill Fields. His last words were, "Take me, for I come to Thee."

So ended, at the age of sixty, a man who, if his importance may be measured by the influence which he has exerted over succeeding generations, must be counted among the most extraordinary persons whom England has produced. It has been the fashion to dwell on the disadvantages of his education, and to regret the carelessness of nature which brought into existence a man of genius in a tinker's hut at Elstow. Nature is less partial than she appears, and all situations in life have their compensations along with them.

Circumstances, I should say, qualified Bunyan perfectly well for the work which he had to do. If he had gone to school, as he said, with Aristotle and Plato; if he had been broken in at a university and been turned into a bishop; if he had been in any one of the learned professions, he might easily have lost, or might have never known,

the secret of his powers. He was born to be the Poet-apostle of the English middle classes, imperfectly educated like himself; and, being one of themselves, he had the key of their thoughts and feelings in his own heart. Like nine out of ten of his countrymen, he came into the world with no fortune but his industry. He had to work with his hands for his bread, and to advance by the side of his neighbours along the road of common business. His knowledge was scanty, though of rare quality. He knew his Bible probably by heart. He had studied history in Foxe's *Martyrs*, but nowhere else that we can trace. The rest of his mental furniture was gathered at first hand from his conscience, his life, and his occupations. Thus, every idea which he received falling into a soil naturally fertile, sprouted up fresh, vigorous, and original. He confessed to have felt (as a man of his powers could hardly have failed to feel) continued doubts about the Bible and the reality of the Divine government. It has been well said that when we look into the world to find the image of God, it is as if we were to stand before a looking-glass, expecting to see ourselves reflected there, and to see nothing. Education scarcely improves our perception in this respect; and wider information, wider acquaintance with the thoughts of other men in other ages and countries, might as easily have increased his difficulties as have assisted him in overcoming them. He was not a man who could have contented himself with compromises and half-convictions. No force could have subdued him into a decent Anglican divine—a "Mr. Two Tongues, parson of the parish." He was passionate and thorough-going. The authority of conscience presented itself to him only in the shape of religious obligation. Religion once shaken into a "perhaps," would have had no existence to him;



and it is easy to conceive a university-bred Bunyan, an intellectual meteor, flaring uselessly across the sky and disappearing in smoke and nothingness.

Powerful temperaments are necessarily intense. Bunyan, born a tinker, had heard right and wrong preached to him in the name of the Christian creed. He concluded after a struggle that Christianity was true, and on that conviction he built himself up into what he was. It might have been the same, perhaps, with Burns had he been born a century before. Given Christianity as an unquestionably true account of the situation and future prospects of man, the feature of it most appalling to the imagination is that hell-fire—a torment exceeding the most horrible which fancy can conceive, and extending into eternity—awaits the enormous majority of the human race. The dreadful probability seized hold on the young Bunyan's mind. He shuddered at it when awake. In the visions of the night it came before him in the tremendous details of the dreadful reality. It became the governing thought in his nature.

Such a belief, if it does not drive a man to madness, will at least cure him of trifling. It will clear his mind of false sentiment, take the nonsense out of him, and enable him to resist vulgar temptation as nothing else will. The danger is that the mind may not bear the strain, that the belief itself may crack and leave nothing. Bunyan was hardly tried, but in him the belief did not crack. It spread over his character. It filled him first with terror; then with a loathing of sin, which entailed so awful a penalty; then, as his personal fears were allayed by the recognition of Christ, it turned to tenderness and pity.

There was no fanaticism in Bunyan; nothing harsh or savage. His natural humour perhaps saved him. His

few recorded sayings all refer to the one central question ; but healthy seriousness often best expresses itself in playful quaintness. He was once going somewhere disguised as a waggoner. He was overtaken by a constable who had a warrant to arrest him. The constable asked him if he knew that devil of a fellow Bunyan. "Know him!" Bunyan said. "You might call him a devil if you knew him as well as I once did."

A Cambridge student was trying to show him what a divine thing reason was—"reason, the chief glory of man, which distinguished him from a beast," &c., &c.

Bunyan growled out: "Sin distinguishes man from beast. Is sin divine?"

He was extremely tolerant in his terms of Church membership. He offended the stricter part of his congregation by refusing even to make infant baptism a condition of exclusion. The only persons with whom he declined to communicate were those whose lives were openly immoral. His chief objection to the Church of England was the admission of the ungodly to the Sacraments. He hated party titles and quarrels upon trifles. He desired himself to be called a Christian or a Believer, or "any name which was approved by the Holy Ghost." Divisions, he said, were to Churches like wars to countries. Those who talked most about religion cared least for it; and controversies about doubtful things, and things of little moment, ate up all zeal for things which were practicable and indisputable.

"In countenance," wrote a friend, "he appeared to be of a stern and rough temper, but in his conversation mild and affable; not given to loquacity or to much discourse in company unless some urgent occasion required it; observing never to boast of himself or his parts, but rather to seem low in his own eyes, and submit himself to the

judgment of others; abhorring lying and swearing; being just, in all that lay in his power, to his word; not seeming to revenge injuries; loving to reconcile differences and make friendships with all. He had a sharp, quick eye, with an excellent discerning of persons, being of good judgment and quick wit." "He was tall of stature, strong-boned, though not corpulent, somewhat of a ruddy face, with sparkling eyes, wearing his hair on his upper lip; his hair reddish, but in his later days time had sprinkled it with grey; his nose well set, but not declining or bending; his mouth moderate large, his forehead something high, and his habit always plain and modest."

He was himself indifferent to advancement, and he did not seek it for his family. A London merchant offered to take his son into his house. "God," he said, "did not send me to advance my family, but to preach the Gospel." He had no vanity—an exemption extremely rare in those who are personally much before the public. The personal popularity was in fact the part of his situation which he least liked. When he was to preach in London, "if there was but one day's notice the meeting-house was crowded to overflowing." Twelve hundred people would be found collected before seven o'clock on a dark winter's morning to hear a lecture from him. In Zoar Street, Southwark, his church was sometimes so crowded that he had to be lifted to the pulpit stairs over the congregation's heads. It pleased him, but he was on the watch against the pleasure of being himself admired. A friend complimented him once, after service, on "the sweet sermon" which he had delivered. "You need not remind me of that," he said. "The devil told me of it before I was out of the pulpit."

"Conviction of sin" has become a conventional phrase,

shallow and ineffective even in those who use it most sincerely. Yet moral evil is still the cause of nine-tenths of the misery in the world, and it is not easy to measure the value of a man who could prolong the conscious sense of the deadly nature of it, even under the forms of a decomposing theology. Times are changing. The intellectual current is bearing us we know not where, and the course of the stream is in a direction which leads us far from the conclusions in which Bunyan and the Puritans established themselves; but the truths which are most essential for us to know cannot be discerned by speculative arguments. Chemistry cannot tell us why some food is wholesome and other food is poisonous. That food is best for us which best nourishes the body into health and strength; and a belief in a Supernatural Power which has given us a law to live by, and to which we are responsible for our conduct, has alone, of all the influences known to us, succeeded in ennobling and elevating the character of man. The particular theories which men have formed about it have often been wild and extravagant. Imagination, agitated by fear or stimulated by pious enthusiasm, has peopled heaven with demigods and saints—creations of fancy, human forms projected upon a mist and magnified into celestial images. How much is true of all that men have believed in past times and have now ceased to believe, how much has been a too eager dream, no one now can tell. It may be that other foundations may be laid hereafter for human conduct on which an edifice can be raised no less fair and beautiful; but no signs of it are as yet apparent.

So far as we yet know, morality rests upon a sense of obligation; and obligation has no meaning except as implying a Divine command, without which it would

cease to be. Until "duty" can be presented to us in a shape which will compel our recognition of it with equal or superior force, the passing away of "the conviction of sin" can operate only to obscure our aspirations after a high ideal of life and character. The scientific theory may be correct, and it is possible that we may be standing on the verge of the most momentous intellectual revolution which has been experienced in the history of our race. It may be so, and also it may not be so. It may be that the most important factors in the scientific equation are beyond the reach of human intellect. However it be, the meat which gives strength to the man is poison to the child; and as yet we are still children, and are likely to remain children. "Every relief from outward restraint," says one who was not given to superstition, "if it be not attended with increased power of self-command, is simply fatal." Men of intelligence, therefore, to whom life is not a theory but a stern fact, conditioned round with endless possibilities of wrong and suffering, though they may never again adopt the letter of Bunyan's creed, will continue to see in conscience an authority for which culture is no substitute; they will conclude that in one form or other responsibility is not a fiction but a truth; and, so long as this conviction lasts, *The Pilgrim's Progress* will still be dear to all men of all creeds who share in it, even though it pleases the "elect" modern philosophers to describe its author as a "Philistine of genius."

THE END.





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